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The Riverside Literature Series

GERMAN HOUSEHOLD TALES

BY

JACOB AND WILHELM GRIMM

TOLD AGAIN IN ENGLISH



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INTRODUCTION.

GRIMM'S TALES is the well-known title of a great number of German wonder stories, and the names of Grimm and Andersen are very often coupled, for their stories have much in common. Andersen was a Dane who had grown up out of the peasant life, and when he came to tell stories, told over again some of the folk-stories which he had heard as a child ; but many more, and those the most characteristic, were of his own invention. Grimm was the name of two German brothers, Jacob Ludwig Karl Grimm and Wilhelm Karl Grimm, who were born, the elder in 1785, the younger in 1786. They were sons of a lawyer, who died when they were quite young, and they were trained in the schools and universities of Germany. Wilhelm, the younger, died in 1859, and Jacob in 1863, so that their lives were nearly equal. They were constantly together and worked in the same scholarly pursuits. They were both most cheerful men, who enjoyed life, and were especially fond of having flowers about them. Their studies they carried on together, though Jacob was the more learned, and made great contribu-

tions to the science of language, while Wilhelm was more artistic in his tastes and was a capital story-teller.

This combination of powers was a happy one for the task which they set themselves of gathering the common stories of the German peasants, and throwing them into the form of written tales. They were thirteen years in picking up the stories which they printed in their first volume in 1812, and three years later they added a second volume. They drew them from a variety of sources. They lived in the province of Hesse-Cassel, from which, by the way, the Hessians came who fought in the British army during the American war for independence; and it was from the peasants in this province that they derived a great many tales. The best friend they had was the wife of a cow-herd, a woman of about fifty, who had a genius for story-telling. In the preface to a later edition, when the authors were describing their task, they said: "Her memory kept a firm hold of all sagas. She herself knew that this gift was not granted to every one, and that there were many who could remember nothing connectedly. She told her stories thoughtfully, accurately, and with wonderful vividness, and evidently had a delight in doing it. First, she related them from beginning to end, and then, if required, repeated them more slowly, so that after some practice it

was perfectly easy to write from her dictation. . . . Any one who holds that tradition is so easily falsified and carelessly preserved that it is impossible for it to last for any length of time, ought to have heard how close she always kept to the story, and how zealous she was for its accuracy. When repeating it she never altered any part, and if she made a mistake always corrected it herself immediately."

The brothers Grimm added a number of stories which they found in old books and manuscripts, but their main purpose was to give as exact a reproduction as they could of stories which may be said to have no author in particular, but to have been passed from one to another, especially from parent to child. They wrote down every story just as they heard it, and this is what gives their collection its great value. They added also interesting notes, showing the various forms which the stories had taken, and the origin of them when they could.

The collection of tales has more than once been translated into English, and the fullest and most faithful translation appears to be that by Margaret Hunt, edited by Andrew Lang and published in two volumes in Bohn's Library. It contains two hundred and ten tales, together with the authors' notes. It will be seen thus that only about a fifth of the number is retained in the present edition ; but any one who takes

the trouble to go through the full collection will readily see that the stories needed to be sifted before they could be offered to children for their reading. It must be remembered that the Grimms were not collecting and reporting the tales for the use of children. Their purpose was to preserve a body of folk-lore and to set it forth in a scientific spirit, and they told just such stories as came to them.

The stories had thus the qualities of the minds that held them, with the ignorance, the superstition, the traditionary beliefs of the peasants of Hesse-Cassel and other places. In many there was a frankness and familiarity in the use of sacred names that would shock an older person reading the stories with children, and would be undesirable for the children themselves to take as matter of course. There is also in the original form a very frequent recourse to the Devil as one of the *dramatis personæ*, and always a great dependence on all manner of imaginary supernatural creatures. In some of the stories also, though not in many, the laws of right and wrong are reversed, and the cruel stepmother is a very much more common figure than she is in real life.

Nevertheless, when the objectionable stories have been thrown out, there remains a goodly number which are well worth saving for the delight and edification of children. The minds

that devised and harbored the stories originally were child-like minds, to whom the world was a much more marvelous place than to modern educated men and women ; not, it should be said, more marvelous than it is to the mind which can penetrate below the surface of things and read the wonders of actual nature ; but superficially more marvelous, and children still look out on the world with somewhat the same eyes.

For one thing, what we call dumb animals and inanimate things are the playmates of children, and it is an easy step for them to take when they talk with these playmates and listen to what in imagination they say. And the transformations wrought by enchantment seem almost as possible to them as chemical changes do to the chemist. They do not with their understandings accept these entertaining stories, but they have much the same sort of belief in them that when they are older they will take in the men and women of Shakespeare's dramas ; and the exercise of their imagination in thus making real the singular objects presented to them is a healthful one, if it is kept simple and unstrained, just as it is good for older people to forget themselves and the actual world in novels, provided the novels do not have the contagion of moral disease in them, and do not keep them from nearer duties.

There is a sturdy element in the nature of healthful children which makes these stories to be appropriated in the right way, so that they furnish delightful entertainment and heighten the activity of the child's imaginative powers. Now and then a child has the misfortune to be born or bred with a supersensitive temper which needs to be guarded, as one child out of many cannot be turned loose in play with its fellows. It would be a pity if the great majority of children were to be deprived of this nutriment because it agrees ill with a few. The lessons, also, if we must use that word, are almost always of the reward of fidelity, constancy, obedience, and cheerful industry; but it is hardly worth while to hunt too energetically for the application of moral principles. The tales have their surest advantage in giving the child's mind a frolic and gambol, as recess gives him a chance to turn somersault and run joyously. A pleasure also will be found by both older persons and children in discovering the likeness between some of these tales and the familiar ones that we think of as English fairy tales. There is a common stock for them, but children may be left to grow up before they are taxed either with the ethnic origin of the tales or with their comparative appearance, or even with their symbolism.

Such stories as these, like the fables and folk-stories and Hans Andersen's tales, belong in the

very early reading ; they come in place after a child has mastered the simplest combinations. He misses a great deal of the pleasure to be derived from them if he has to wait till he has read all the school readers ; he will then be too old to take the heartiest interest in them. Therefore, in editing this collection, the editor has kept before his mind the intelligence of a child beginning to read, and has aimed at relieving the stories of unnecessarily hard words and involved forms. A simple, straightforward English, a vocabulary largely of Saxon speech, and a quickness of movement have been sought. It will be a great satisfaction if children from seven to nine years of age can make out to read it, and one of the greatest reinforcements to the courage of such readers will be found in the interest created by the stories themselves.

H. E. S.



GERMAN HOUSEHOLD TALES.

THE CAT AND THE MOUSE.

A CERTAIN Cat had made friends with a Mouse, and had said so much to her about the great love she felt for her that at last the Mouse agreed they should keep house together.

“But we must put away some things for winter, or else we shall suffer from hunger,” said the Cat; “and you, little Mouse, cannot go everywhere, or you will be caught in a trap some day.” So a pot of fat was bought, but they did not know where to put it. At last the Cat said, —

“I know no place where it will be better stored than in the church, for no one dares take anything away from there. We will set it there, and not touch it until we are really in need of it.” So the pot was placed in safety, but it was not long before the Cat had a great longing for it, and said to the Mouse, —

“I want to tell you something, little Mouse; my cousin has a little son and has asked me to be godmother; he is white with brown spots. Let me go out to-day, and you look after the house by yourself.”

“Yes, yes,” answered the Mouse, “by all

means go ; and if you get anything very good, think of me. I should like a drop of sweet red wine too." But all this was untrue ; the Cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to be godmother. She went straight to the church, stole to the pot of fat, began to lick at it, and licked the top of the fat off. Then she took a walk upon the roofs of the town, and stretched herself in the sun, and licked her lips whenever she thought of the pot of fat, and not until it was evening did she return home.

" Well, here you are again," said the Mouse ; " no doubt you have had a merry day."

" All went off well," answered the Cat.

" What name did they give the child ?"

" Top-off !" said the Cat quite coolly.

" Top-off !" cried the Mouse, " that is a very odd name ; is it a usual one in your family ?"

" What does it matter," said the Cat ; " it is not worse than Crumb-stealer, as your god-children are called."

Before long the Cat had another fit of longing. She said to the Mouse, —

" You must do me a favor, and once more manage the house for a day alone. I am again asked to be godmother, and, as the child has a white ring round its neck, I cannot refuse." The good Mouse consented, but the Cat crept behind the town walls to the church, and devoured half the pot of fat.

"Nothing ever seems so good as what one keeps to one's self," said she, and was quite content with her day's work. When she went home the Mouse inquired, —

"And what was this child named?"

"Half-done," answered the Cat.

"Half-done! What are you saying? I never heard the name in my life."

The Cat's mouth soon began to water for some more licking.

"All good things go in threes," said she; "I am asked to stand godmother again. The child is quite black, only it has white paws; but except that, it has not a single white hair on its whole body. This only happens once every few years, and I don't know when it will happen again; you will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-off! Half-done!" answered the Mouse. "They are such odd names, they make me very thoughtful."

"You sit at home," said the Cat, "in your dark-gray fur coat and long tail, and are filled with fancies; that's because you do not go out in the daytime." During the Cat's absence the Mouse cleaned the house, and put it in order, but the greedy Cat entirely emptied the pot of fat.

"When everything is eaten up one has some peace," said she to herself, and, well filled and fat, she did not return home till night. The

Mouse at once asked what name had been given to the third child.

“It will not please you more than the others,” said the Cat. “He is called All-gone.”

“All-gone,” cried the Mouse; “that is the queerest name of all! I have never seen it in print. All-gone! — what can that mean?” and she shook her head, curled herself up, and lay down to sleep.

From this time forth no one invited the Cat to be godmother, but when the winter had come and there was no longer anything to be found outside, the Mouse thought of their store, and said, —

“Come, Cat, we will go to our pot of fat which we have stored up for ourselves — we shall enjoy that.”

“Yes,” answered the Cat, “you will enjoy it as much as you would enjoy sticking that dainty tongue of yours out of the window.” They set out on their way, but when they reached the church the pot of fat was still in its place, but it was empty.

“Alas!” said the Mouse, “now I see what has happened; now it comes to light! You a true friend! You have eaten all when you were standing godmother. First top off, then half done, then” —

“Will you hold your tongue,” cried the Cat; “one word more, and I will eat you too.”

“ All gone ” was already on the poor Mouse’s lips ; scarcely had she spoken it before the Cat sprang on her, seized her, and swallowed her down. Verily, that is the way of the world.

OLD SULTAN.

A FARMER once had a faithful dog called Sultan, who had grown old, and lost all his teeth, so that he could no longer hold anything fast. One day the farmer was standing with his wife before the door, and said, —

“To-morrow I think I must shoot Old Sultan; he is no longer of any use.” His wife, who felt pity for the faithful beast, said, —

“He has served us so long, and been so faithful, we might well give him his keep.”

“Eh! what?” said the man. “You are not very sharp. He has not a tooth left in his mouth, and not a thief is afraid of him; now he may be off. If he has served us, he has had good feeding for it.”

The poor Dog, who was lying in the sun not far off, heard everything, and was sorry to-morrow was to be his last day. He had a good friend, a Wolf, and he crept out in the evening into the wood to him, and told him what was to happen.

“Hark ye,” said the Wolf, “be of good cheer, I will help you out of your trouble. I have thought of a way. To-morrow, early in

the morning, your master is going with his wife to make hay, and they will take their little child with them, for no one will be left behind in the house. While they are working they will lay the child under the hedge in the shade ; you lay yourself there too, just as if you wished to take care of it. Then I will come out of the wood, and carry off the child. You must rush after me, as if you would take it away from me. I will let it fall, and you will take it back to its parents, who will think you have saved it, and will be far too grateful to do you any harm ; you will be in high favor, and they will never let you want for anything again."

The plan pleased the Dog, and all went off just as the Wolf said. The father screamed when he saw the Wolf running across the field with his child, but when Old Sultan brought it back he was full of joy, and stroked him and said, —

"Not a hair of yours shall be hurt ; you shall eat my bread free as long as you live." And to his wife he said, "Go home at once and make Old Sultan some bread-sop that he will not have to bite, and bring the pillow out of my bed ; I will give him that to lie upon."

After this Old Sultan was as well off as he could wish to be. Now the Wolf came to visit him, and was pleased that all had gone off so well.

“But,” said he, “you will just wink an eye if, when I have a chance, I carry off one of your master’s fat sheep.”

“Do not reckon upon that,” answered the Dog; “I will remain true to my master; I cannot agree to that.” The Wolf thought Old Sultan did not really mean this, and he came creeping about in the night and was going to take away the sheep. But the farmer, to whom the faithful Sultan had told the Wolf’s plan, caught him and gave him a sound beating. The Wolf had to be off, but he cried out to the Dog, —

“Wait a bit, you rascal you shall pay for this.”

Next day the Wolf sent the Boar to bid the Dog come out into the wood so that they might settle the affair. Old Sultan could find no one to stand by him but a Cat with only three legs, and as they went out together the poor Cat limped along, and at the same time stuck out her tail into the air with pain.

The Wolf and his friend were on the spot, waiting, but, when they saw the Dog coming, they thought he was bringing a sword with him, for they mistook the tail of the Cat for one. And when the poor beast hopped on its three legs, they could only think every time that it was picking up a stone to throw at them. So they were both afraid; the wild Boar crept into the underbrush and the Wolf jumped up a tree.

The Dog and the Cat, when they came up, wondered that there was no one to be seen. But the wild Boar had not been able to hide himself wholly ; and one of his ears was still to be seen. As the Cat was looking all about, the Boar moved his ear ; the Cat thought it was a mouse moving there, and she jumped upon it and bit it hard. The Boar made a great noise and ran away, crying out, —

“The real sinner is up in the tree.” The Dog and the Cat looked up and saw the Wolf, who hung his head and looked sheepish enough, and made peace with the Dog.

THE NAIL.

A MERCHANT had done good business at the fair ; he had sold his wares, and filled his bag with gold and silver. Then he set out at once on his journey home, for he wished to be in his own house before night. He packed his bag with the money on his horse, and rode away.

At noon he rested in a town ; when he wanted to go on, the stable-boy brought out his horse, and said, —

“ A nail is wanting, sir, in the shoe of its left hind foot.”

“ Let it be wanting,” answered the merchant ; “ the shoe will stay on for the six miles I have still to go. I am in a hurry.” In the afternoon, when he once more got down and had his horse fed, the stable-boy went into the room to him, and said, —

“ Sir, a shoe is wanting from your horse’s left hind foot. Shall I take him to the blacksmith ? ”

“ Let it still be wanting,” said the man ; “ the horse can very well hold out for a couple of miles more. I am in a hurry.”

He rode forth, but before long the horse be-

gan to limp. It had not limped long before it began to stumble, and it had not stumbled long before it fell down and broke its leg. The merchant had to leave the horse where it was, and unstrap the bag, take it on his back, and go home on foot. And he did not get there until quite late at night.

“That unlucky nail,” said he to himself, “has made all this trouble.”

Make haste slowly.

THE FROG-KING.

IN old times when wishes were horses and beggars could ride, there lived a king who had beautiful daughters, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun itself, which had seen so much, was amazed whenever it shone in her face. Close by the King's castle was a great dark wood, and under an old lime-tree in the wood was a well. When the day was very warm, the King's child went out into the wood and sat down by the side of the cool fountain; when she was dull she took a golden ball, and threw it up on high and caught it.

This ball was her favorite plaything, and it chanced that once the Princess's golden ball did not fall into the little hand which she was holding up for it, but on to the ground beyond, and rolled straight into the water. The King's daughter followed it with her eyes, but it was gone, and the well was deep, — so deep that she could not see the bottom. At this she began to cry, and cried louder and louder, and would not be comforted. As she thus wept, some one said to her, —

“What ails you, King's daughter? You

weep so that a very stone would show pity." She looked round to find where the voice came from, and saw a Frog stretching forth its thick, ugly head from the water.

"Ah! old water-splasher, is it you?" said she; "I am weeping for my golden ball, which has fallen into the well."

"Be quiet, and do not weep," said the Frog; "I can help you, but what will you give me if I bring your plaything up again?"

"Whatever you will have, dear Frog," said she — "my clothes, my pearls and jewels, and even the golden crown I wear." The Frog answered, —

"I do not care for your clothes, pearls and jewels, or your golden crown, but if you will love me and let me be your friend and play-fellow, and sit by you at your little table, and eat off your little golden plate, and drink out of your little cup, and sleep in your little bed — if you will promise me this I will go down below, and bring the golden ball up again."

"Oh, yes," said she, "I promise you all you wish, if you will but bring me my ball back again." For she said to herself, "How the silly Frog does talk! He lives in the water with the other frogs and croaks, and cannot live with any human being!"

But the Frog when she had promised him all this, put his head into the water and sank

down ; in a short time he came swimming up again with the ball in his mouth, and threw it on the grass. The King's daughter was delighted to see her pretty plaything once more, and picked it up, and ran away with it.

“ Wait, wait,” said the Frog, “ take me with you. I can't run as fast as you can.” But what good was it for him to scream his croak, croak, after her, as loudly as he could ? She did not listen to it, but ran home and soon forgot the poor Frog, who was forced to go back into his well again.

The next day when she had seated herself at table with the King and all the court, and was eating from her little golden plate, something came creeping splish splash, splish splash, up the marble staircase ; when it had got to the top, it knocked at the door, and cried, —

“ Princess, youngest princess, open the door for me.” She ran to see who was there, but when she opened the door, there sat the Frog in front of it. Then she slammed the door to, in great haste, sat down to dinner again, and was very uneasy. The King saw plainly that her heart was beating hard, and said, —

“ My child, what are you so afraid of ? Is there a giant outside who wants to carry you away ? ”

“ Ah, no,” said she ; “ it is no giant, but a horrid Frog.”

“What does the Frog want with you?”

“Ah, dear father, yesterday when I was in the wood sitting by the well playing, my golden ball fell into the water. And because I cried so the Frog brought it out again for me, and because he made such a point of it, I promised him he should be my friend, but I never thought he would be able to come out of his water! And now he is outside there, and wants to come in to me.”

The Frog knocked a second time, and cried,—

“Princess! youngest princess!
Open the door for me!
Do you not know what befell
Yesterday by the side of the well?
Princess, youngest princess!
Open the door for me!”

Then said the King, “You must do what you said you would. Go and let him in.” She went and opened the door, and the Frog hopped in and followed her, step by step, to her chair. There he sat still and cried,—

“Lift me up.” She did not like to, but at last the King bade her do it. When the Frog was once on the chair he wanted to be on the table, and when he was on the table he said,—

“Now, push your little golden plate nearer to me, that we may eat together.” She did this, but it was easy to see that she did not want to do it. The Frog enjoyed what he ate, but almost every mouthful she took choked her. At last he said,—

“I have eaten, and have had enough. Now I am tired; carry me into your little room, and make your little silken bed ready, and I will lie down and go to sleep.”

The King's daughter began to cry, for she was afraid of the cold Frog, which she did not like to touch, and which was now to sleep in her pretty, clean little bed. But the King grew angry, and said, —

“You ought not to feel so to one who helped you when you were in trouble.” So she took hold of the Frog with two fingers, carried him upstairs, and put him in a corner. But when she was in bed he crept to her and said, —

“I am tired; I want to sleep as well as you. Lift me up, or I will tell your father.” Then she was very angry, and took him up and threw him with all her might against the wall.

“Now, will you be quiet, hateful Frog?” she said. But when he fell down he was no Frog but a King's son with beautiful kind eyes. Then he told her how he had been made a Frog by a wicked woman, and how no one but she could undo the mischief, and that to-morrow they would go together into his kingdom. The next morning, when the sun was up, a carriage came driving up with eight white horses, which had white ostrich feathers on their heads, and were harnessed with golden harness; behind stood the young King's servant, faithful Henry.

Faithful Henry had been so unhappy when his master was changed into a Frog that he had three iron bands laid round his heart, lest it should burst with grief and sadness. The carriage was to carry the young King into his kingdom. Faithful Henry helped them both in, and got up behind, and was full of joy because his master had been set free. And when they had driven a part of the way, the King's son heard a cracking behind him as if something had broken. So he turned round, and cried, —

“ Henry, the carriage is breaking.”

“ No, master, it is not the carriage. It is a band from my heart, which was put there in my great pain when you were a frog and shut up in the well.” Again and once again while they were on their way something cracked, and each time the King's son thought the carriage was breaking ; but it was only the bands which were springing from the heart of faithful Henry because his master was set free and was happy.

THE HARE AND THE HEDGEHOG.

A HEDGEHOG stood by his door with his arms akimbo, one Sunday morning. He was taking the air and slowly trilling a little song to himself, which was neither better nor worse than the songs which Hedgehogs are in the habit of singing on a happy Sunday morning. While he was thus singing half aloud to himself, he fell to thinking that, while his wife was washing and drying the children, he might very well take a walk into the field, and see how his turnips were going on. The turnips were, in fact, close by his house, and he and his family were wont to eat them; so he looked upon them as his own.

No sooner said than done. The Hedgehog shut the house-door behind him, and took the path to the field. He had not gone very far from home, and was just turning round the bush which stands there outside the field, to go up into the turnip-field; there he saw the Hare, who had gone out on an errand of the same kind; he meant to visit his cabbages.

When the Hedgehog caught sight of the Hare, he bade him a friendly good-morning.

But the Hare, who was in his own way a great man, and very proud, did not return the Hedgehog's greeting, but said to him, in a lofty manner, —

“How do you happen to be running about here in the field so early in the morning?”

“I am taking a walk,” said the Hedgehog.

“A walk!” said the Hare, with a smile. “It seems to me you might use your legs for something better.” This answer made the Hedgehog very angry, for he can bear anything but a sneer at his legs, which are crooked by nature. So now the Hedgehog said to the Hare, —

“You seem to think you can do more with your legs than I with mine.”

“That is just what I do think,” said the Hare.

“That can be put to the test,” said the Hedgehog. “I bet that if we run a race I will outstrip you.”

“That is absurd! You with your short legs!” said the Hare; “but for my part I am willing, if you have such a great fancy for it. What shall we bet?”

“A piece of gold and a bottle of wine,” said the Hedgehog.

“Done,” said the Hare. “Shake hands on it, and then it may as well come off at once.”

“Nay,” said the Hedgehog, “there is no such great hurry! I am still hungry: I will go home

first, and have a little breakfast. In half an hour I will be back again at this place.”

At this the Hedgehog went off, for the Hare was willing. On his way the Hedgehog thought to himself, —

“The Hare trusts to his long legs, but I will contrive to get the better of him. He may be a great man, but he is a very silly fellow, and he shall pay for what he has said.” So when the Hedgehog reached home, he said to his wife, —

“Wife, dress yourself quickly; you must go out to the field with me.”

“What is going on there?” said his wife.

“I have made a bet with the Hare for a piece of gold and a bottle of wine. I am to run a race with him, and you must be on hand.”

“Good heavens, husband,” the wife now cried, “have you lost your wits? What can make you want to run a race with the Hare?”

“Hold your tongue, woman,” said the Hedgehog; “that is my affair. Don’t begin to talk about things which are matters for men. Be off, dress yourself, and come with me.” What could the Hedgehog’s wife do? She had to obey him, whether she liked it or not.

So when they had set out on their way, the Hedgehog said to his wife, —

“Now listen to what I am going to say. Look you, I will make the long field our race-course. The Hare shall run in one furrow, and I in an-

other, and we will begin to run from the top. Now all that you have to do is to place yourself here below in the furrow, and when the Hare comes to the end of the furrow on the other side of you, you must cry out to him, 'I am here already!'"

So they came to the field; the Hedgehog showed his wife her place, and then walked up the field. When he reached the top, the Hare was already there.

"Shall we start?" said the Hare.

"Ay, ay," said the Hedgehog.

"Then both at once." So saying, each placed himself in his own furrow. The Hare counted, "One, two, three, and away!" and went off like the wind down the field. The Hedgehog only ran about three paces, and then he stooped down in the furrow, and stayed quietly where he was.

So when the Hare came on a full run at the lower end of the field, the Hedgehog's wife met him with the cry, —

"I am here already!" The Hare was shocked, and could not make it out; he thought of course it was the Hedgehog himself who was calling to him, for the Hedgehog's wife looked just like her husband. The Hare, however, thought to himself, —

"That has not been done fairly," and cried, "It must be run again; let us have it again."

And once more he went off like the wind in a storm, so that he seemed to fly. But the Hedgehog's wife stayed quietly in her place. So when the Hare reached the top of the field, the Hedgehog himself cried out to him, —

“I am here already.” The Hare, however, quite beside himself with anger, cried, —

“It must be run again; we must have it again.”

“All right,” said the Hedgehog; “for my part I'll run as often as you like.” So the Hare ran seventy-three times more, and the Hedgehog always held out against him, and every time the Hare reached either the top or the bottom, either the Hedgehog or his wife said, —

“I am here already.”

At the seventy-fourth time, the Hare could no longer reach the end. In the middle of the field he fell to the ground, and lay dead on the spot. But the Hedgehog took the piece of gold he had won and the bottle of wine, and called his wife out of the furrow; both went home together side by side, and if they are not dead, they are living there still.

BRIDES ON THEIR TRIAL.

THERE was once a young shepherd who wished much to marry ; he knew three sisters who were all equally pretty, so that it was very hard for him to make a choice. Then he asked his mother what he should do, and she said, —

“ Bid all three to a feast, and set some cheese before them, and watch how they eat it.” The youth did so : the first swallowed the cheese with the rind on ; the second hastily cut the rind off the cheese, but she cut it so quickly that she left much good cheese with it, and threw that away also ; the third peeled the rind off carefully, and cut neither too much nor too little. The shepherd told all this to his mother, and she said, —

“ Take the third for your wife.” This he did, and lived happily with her, for he found her a prudent wife.

THE PACK OF RAGAMUFFINS.

THE Cock once said to the Hen, —

“It is now the time when the nuts are ripe ; so let us go to the hill together and for once eat our fill before the Squirrel takes them all away.”

“Yes,” replied the Hen, “come, we will have some pleasure together.” Then they went away to the hill, and as it was a bright day they stayed till evening. Now I do not know whether it was that they had eaten till they were too fat, or whether they had become proud, but they would not go home on foot, and the Cock had to build a little carriage of nutshells. When it was ready, the little Hen seated herself in it and said to the Cock, —

“Just harness yourself to it.”

“I like that !” said the Cock, “I would rather go home on foot than let myself be harnessed to it ; no, that is not our bargain. I do not mind being coachman and sitting on the box, but drag it myself I will not.” As they were thus disputing, a Duck quacked to them, —

“You thieving folks, who said you might go to my nut-hill ? Wait, you shall pay for it !”

and ran with open beak at the Cock. But the Cock also was not idle, and fell boldly on the Duck, and at last wounded her so with his spurs that she begged for mercy, and let herself be harnessed to the carriage.

The little Cock now seated himself on the box and was coachman, and they went off in a gallop, with "Duck, go as fast as you can." When they had driven a part of the way they met two going afoot. They were a Pin and a Needle, and they cried, "Stop ! stop !" and said that it would soon be as dark as pitch, and then they could not go a step farther, and that it was dirty on the road ; they asked if they could not get into the carriage for a while. They had been at the tailor's inn by the gate, and had stayed too long over the beer.

As they were thin people, who did not take up much room, the Cock let them both get in, but they had to promise him and his little Hen not to step on their feet. Late in the evening they came to an inn, and as they did not like to go farther by night, and as the Duck also was not strong on her feet, and fell from one side to the other, they went in.

The host at first would not take them ; he said his house was already full ; besides, he thought they could not be very great persons ; but at last, as they made pleasant speeches, and told him that he should have the egg which the

little Hen had laid on the way, and should also keep the Duck, which laid one every day, he at last said they might stay one night. And now they had themselves well served, and feasted and rioted.

Early in the morning, when day was breaking, and every one was asleep, the Cock awoke the Hen, brought the egg, pecked it open, and they ate it together, but they threw the shell on the hearth. Then they went to the Needle, which was still asleep, took it by the head and stuck it into the cushion of the landlord's chair; they put the Pin in his towel, and at last without more ado they flew away over the heath.

The Duck, who liked to sleep in the open air and had stayed in the yard, heard them going away; she made herself merry and found a stream, down which she swam; that was a much quicker way of traveling than dragging a carriage.

The host did not get out of bed for two hours after this; he washed himself and wanted to dry himself, but the Pin went over his face and made a red streak from one ear to the other. After this he went into the kitchen and wanted to light a pipe, but when he came to the hearth the eggshell darted into his eyes.

"This morning everything attacks my head," said he, and sat down angrily in his grandfather's chair, but he jumped up again and cried,

“Woe is me,” for the Needle had pricked him still worse than the Pin, and not in the head.

Now he was very angry indeed, and was sure the mischief had been done by the guests who had come so late the night before; when he went and looked about for them, they were gone. Then he made a vow to take no more ragamuffins into his house, for they eat much, pay for nothing, and play tricks into the bargain by way of thanks.

SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED.

THERE was once a poor widow who lived in a lonely cottage. In front of the cottage was a garden, and in the garden stood two rose-trees; one of these bore white roses and the other red roses. The widow had two children who were like the two rose-trees, so she called one Snow-white, and the other Rose-red.

They were as good and happy, as busy and cheerful as ever two children in the world were, only Snow-white was more quiet and gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red liked better to run about in the meadows and fields looking for flowers and catching butterflies; but Snow-white sat at home with her mother, and helped her with her house-work, or read to her when there was nothing to do.

The two children were so fond of each other that they always held each other by the hand when they went out together, and when Snow-white said, —

“We will not leave each other,” Rose-red answered, “Never, so long as we live,” and their mother would add, —

“What one has she must share with the ther.”

They often ran about the wood alone, and picked red berries ; the beasts did them no harm, but came close to them. The little Hare would eat a cabbage-leaf out of their hands ; the Roe grazed by their side ; the Stag leapt merrily by them, and the Birds sat still upon the boughs, and sang whatever they knew.

No mishap befell them ; if they had stayed too late in the wood, and night came on, they lay down near each other upon the moss, and slept till morning came ; their mother knew this, and so was never anxious about them.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother's little cottage so neat that it was good to look inside it. In the summer Rose-red took care of the house, and every morning laid some flowers by her mother's bed before she awoke ; there was always a rose from each tree. In the winter Snow-white lit the fire and hung the kettle on the crane. The kettle was of copper, and shone like gold, it was polished so brightly. In the evening, when the snowflakes fell, the mother said, —

“ Go, Snow-white, and bolt the door,” and then they sat round the hearth, and the mother put on her glasses and read aloud out of a large book ; the two girls listened as they sat and span. And close by them lay a Lamb upon the floor, and behind them, upon a perch, sat a white Dove with its head tucked beneath its wings.

One evening, as they sat thus by each other, some one knocked at the door as if he wished to be let in. The mother said, —

“Quick, Rose-red, open the door, it must be a traveler who needs to come under cover.” Rose-red went and pushed back the bolt, but it was not a poor man; it was a Bear that poked his broad, black head inside the door.

Rose-red screamed and sprang back, the Lamb bleated, the Dove trembled, and Snow-white hid herself behind her mother’s bed. But the Bear began to speak and said, —

“Do not be afraid; I will do you no harm! I am half frozen, and only want to warm myself a little beside you.”

“Poor Bear,” said the mother, “lie down by the fire, only take care that you do not burn your coat.” Then she cried, —

“Snow-white, Rose-red, come out, the Bear will do you no harm, he means well.” So they both came out, and by and by the Lamb and Dove came nearer, and were not afraid of him. The Bear said, —

“Here, children, knock the snow out of my coat a little;” so they brought the broom and swept the Bear’s hide clean; and he stretched himself by the fire and growled, he was so warm and easy in his mind.

It was not long before they grew quite at home, and played tricks with their clumsy guest.

They pulled at his hair with their hands ; they put their feet upon his back and rolled him about, or they took a switch and beat him, and when he growled they laughed. But the Bear took it all in good part, only when they were too rough he called out, —

“ Leave me alive, children !

“ Snowy-white, Rosy-red,
Will you beat your lover dead ? ”

When it was bedtime, and the others went to bed, the mother said to the Bear, —

“ You can lie there by the hearth, and then you will be safe from the cold and the bad weather.” As soon as day dawned the two children let him out, and he trotted across the snow into the forest.

After that the Bear came every evening at the same time, lay down by the hearth, and let the children play with him as much as they liked ; and they got so used to him that the doors were never locked until their black friend had come in.

When spring had come and all outside was green, the Bear said one morning to Snow-white, —

“ Now I must go away, and cannot come back for the whole summer.”

“ Where are you going, dear Bear ? ” asked Snow-white.

“ I must go into the wood and guard my treas-

ures from the wicked Dwarfs. In the winter, when the earth is frozen hard, they have to stay below and cannot work their way through ; but now, when the sun has thawed and warmed the earth, they break through, and come out to pry and steal ; and what once gets into their hands, and into their caves, does not easily get out again."

Snow-white was sorry that he went away, but she unbolted the door for him ; as the Bear was hurrying out, he caught against the bolt and a piece of his hairy coat was torn off ; it seemed to Snow-white as if she had seen gold shining through it, but she was not sure. The Bear ran away quickly, and was soon out of sight behind the trees.

A short time after, the mother sent the children into the wood to pick up sticks for the fire. There they found a big tree which lay on the ground ; close by the trunk something was jumping backward and forward in the grass, but they could not make out what it was. When they came nearer they saw it was a Dwarf with an old withered face and a snow-white beard a yard long. The end of the beard was caught in a crack of the tree, and the little fellow was jumping backward and forward like a dog tied to a rope, and did not know what to do.

He glared at the girls with his fiery red eyes, cried, —

"Why do you stand there? Can you not come here and help me?"

"What are you about there, little man?" asked Rose-red.

"You stupid, prying goose!" said the Dwarf; "I was going to split the tree to get a little wood for cooking. I had just driven the wedge safely in, and everything was going as I wished; but the horrid wood was too smooth and the wedge flew out; the tree closed quickly and caught my beautiful white beard; so now it is tight in and I cannot get away, and the silly, sleek, milk-faced things laugh! Ugh! how hateful you are!"

The children tried very hard, but they could not pull the beard out; it was caught too fast.

"I will run and fetch some one," said Rose-red.

"You silly goose!" snarled the Dwarf; "why should you fetch some one? You are already two too many for me; can you not think of something better?"

"Don't be cross," said Snow-white; "I will help you," and she pulled her scissors out of her pocket, and cut off the end of the beard.

As soon as the Dwarf was free, he laid hold of a bag which lay by the roots of the tree; it was full of gold, and he lifted it up, grumbling to himself, —

"Stupid people, to cut off a piece of my fine

beard. Bad luck to you!" and then he swung the bag upon his back, and went off without even once looking at the children.

Some time after that Snow-white and Rose-red went to catch a dish of fish. As they came near the brook they saw something like a large grasshopper jumping toward the water, as if it were going to leap in. They ran to it and found it was the Dwarf.

"Where are you going?" said Rose-red; "you surely don't want to go into the water?"

"I am not such a fool!" cried the Dwarf; "don't you see that the naughty fish wants to pull me in?" The little man had been sitting there fishing, and the wind had twisted his beard with the fishing-line; just then a big fish bit, and the Dwarf was not strong enough to pull it out; instead of that, the fish pulled the Dwarf toward him. He held on to all the reeds and rushes, but it was of little use; he had to follow the fish as it pulled, and was in great danger of being dragged into the water.

The girls came just in time; they held him fast and tried to free his beard from the line; it was in vain; beard and line were in a snarl. Nothing was left but to bring out the scissors and cut the beard, and so a small part of it was lost. When the Dwarf saw that, he screamed out, —

"Is that civil, you toad-stool, to mar one's

face? Was it not enough to clip off the end of my beard? Now you have cut off the best part of it. I cannot let myself be seen by my people. I wish you had been made to run the soles off your shoes!" Then he took out a sack of pearls which lay in the rushes, and without saying a word more he dragged it away and was out of sight behind a stone.

It happened soon after, that the mother sent the two children to town to buy needles and thread, and laces and ribbons. The road led them across a plain, and on the plain huge pieces of rock lay here and there. Now they saw a large bird up in the air, flying slowly round and round above them; it sank lower and lower, and at last settled near a rock not far off. All at once they heard a loud cry for help. They ran up and saw with horror that the eagle had seized their old friend the Dwarf, and was going to carry him off.

The children, full of pity, at once took tight hold of the little man, and pulled against the eagle so long that at last the eagle let his prey go. As soon as the Dwarf found himself safe he cried with his shrill voice, —

"Could you not have done it with more care? You pulled at my brown coat so that it is all torn and full of holes, you clumsy things!" Then he took up a sack full of precious stones, and slipped away again under the rock into his

hole. The girls, who by this time were used to getting no thanks from him, went on their way and did their errands in the town.

As they crossed the plain again on their way home they came upon the Dwarf, who had emptied his bag of precious stones upon a clean spot, and had not thought that any one would come there so late. The evening sun shone upon the brilliant stones; they glittered and sparkled with all colors so finely that the children stood still and looked at them.

“Why do you stand gaping there?” cried the Dwarf, and his gray face became red with rage. He was going on with his bad words when a loud growl was heard, and a black Bear came trotting toward them out of the wood. The Dwarf sprang up in a fright, but he could not get to his cave, for the Bear was already close. Then in his fear he cried, —

“Dear Mr. Bear, spare me. I will give you all my treasures; look, see the beautiful jewels lying there! Grant me my life; what do you want with such a little fellow as I? you would not feel me between your teeth. Come, take these two wicked girls. They are tender morsels for you; they are fat as young quails; for mercy’s sake eat them!” The Bear took no heed of his words, but gave the wicked thing a single blow with his paw, and he did not move again.

The girls had run away, but the Bear called to them, —

“Snow-white and Rose-red, do not be afraid ; wait, I will come with you.” Then they knew his voice and waited ; when he came up to them at once his bearskin fell off, and he stood there a handsome man, clothed in gold.

“I am a King’s son,” he said, “and I was bewitched by that wicked Dwarf, who had stolen my treasures ; I have had to run about the wood as a Bear until I was freed by his death. Now he has got his deserts.”

Snow-white was married to him, and Rose-red to his brother, and they shared between them the great treasure which the Dwarf had got together in his cave. The old mother lived in peace, and happily, with her children for many years. She took the two rose-trees with her, and they stood before her window, and every year bore the most beautiful roses, white and red.

MOTHER HOLLE.

THERE was once a widow who had two daughters ; one of them was pretty and worked hard ; the other was ugly and idle. But she was much fonder of the ugly and idle one, because she was her own daughter ; and the other had to do all the work, and be the Cinderella of the house. Every day the poor girl had to sit by a well, in the road, and spin and spin till her fingers bled.

Now one day the shuttle was marked with her blood, so she went to the well, to wash the mark off ; but it dropped out of her hand and fell to the bottom. She began to weep, and ran to her mother and told her of the mishap. But the widow scolded her sharply, and was so unkind as to say, —

“ Since you have let the shuttle fall in, you must fetch it out again.”

So the girl went back to the well, and did not know what to do ; and in the sorrow of her heart she jumped into the well to get the shuttle. She lost her senses ; and when she awoke and came to herself again, she was in a lovely meadow, where the sun was shining and

many thousands of flowers were growing. Along this meadow she went, and at last came to a baker's oven full of bread, and the Bread cried out, —

“Oh, take me out! take me out! or I shall burn; I have been baked a long time!” So she went up to it, and took out all the loaves one after another with the bread-shovel. After that she went on till she came to a Tree covered with apples, which called out to her, —

“Oh, shake me! shake me! we apples are all ripe!” So she shook the Tree till the apples fell like rain, and went on shaking till they were all down, and when she had gathered them into a heap she went on her way.

At last she came to a little house, and an old woman peeped out of it; but she had such large teeth that the girl was afraid, and was about to run away. But the old woman called out to her, —

“What are you afraid of, dear child? Stay with me; if you will do all the work in the house properly, you shall be the better for it. Only you must take care to make my bed well, and to shake it thoroughly till the feathers fly — for then there is snow on the earth. I am Mother Holle.”

As the old woman spoke so kindly to her, the girl took heart and agreed to stay with her. She did everything well, and always shook her

bed so hard that the feathers flew about like snowflakes. So she had a pleasant life with the old woman; never an angry word; and boiled or roast meat every day.

She stayed some time with Mother Holle, and then she became sad. At first she did not know what was the matter with her, but found at last it was homesickness; she was many thousand times better off here than at home, still she had a longing to be there. At last she said to the old woman, —

“I have a longing for home; and well off as I am down here, I cannot stay any longer; I must go up again to my own people.” Mother Holle said, —

“I am pleased that you long for your home again, and as you have served me so truly, I myself will take you up again.” So she took her by the hand, and led her to a large door. The door was opened, and just as the maiden was standing beneath the doorway a heavy shower of golden rain fell, and all the gold remained sticking to her, so that she was completely covered with it.

“You shall have that because you have been so busy,” said Mother Holle; and at the same time she gave her back the shuttle which she had let fall into the well. At that the door closed, and the maiden found herself up above upon the earth, not far from her mother’s house.

As she went into the yard the Cock was standing by the well-side, and cried —

“Cock-a-doodle-doo !

Your golden girl’s come back to you !”

So she went in to her mother, and as she came thus covered with gold, she was welcomed, both by her and her sister.

The girl told all that had happened to her ; and as soon as the mother heard how she had come by so much wealth, she was very anxious to obtain the same good luck for the ugly and lazy daughter. So this girl had to seat herself by the well and spin ; but she hated to work, and in order that her shuttle might be stained with blood, she stuck her hand into a thorn bush and pricked her finger. Then she threw her shuttle into the well, and jumped in after it.

She came, like the other, to the beautiful meadow and walked along the very same path. When she got to the oven the Bread again cried, —

“ Oh, take me out ! take me out ! or I shall burn ; I have been baked a long time !” But the lazy thing answered, —

“ As if I had any wish to make myself dirty ?” and on she went. Soon she came to the Apple-Tree, which cried, —

“ Oh, shake me ! shake me ! we apples are all ripe !” But she answered, —

“ I like that ! One of you might fall on my

head," and so went on. When she came to Mother Holle's house she was not afraid, for she had already heard of her big teeth, and she hired herself to her at once.

The first day she forced herself to work hard, and obeyed Mother Holle when she told her to do anything, for she was thinking of all the gold that she would get. But on the second day she began to be lazy, and on the third day still more so, and then she would not get up in the morning at all. Neither did she make Mother Holle's bed as she ought, and did not shake it so as to make the feathers fly up.

Mother Holle was soon tired of this, and gave her notice to leave. The lazy girl was willing enough to go, and thought that now the golden rain would come. Mother Holle led her, too, to the great door; but while she was standing under it, instead of the gold a big kettleful of pitch was emptied over her.

"That is the reward of your service," said Mother Holle, and shut the door.

So the lazy girl went home; but she was quite covered with pitch, and the Cock by the well-side, as soon as he saw her, cried out, —

"Cock-a-doodle-doo !

Your pitchy girl's come back to you ! "

And the pitch stuck fast to her, and could not be got off as long as she lived.

THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS.

A CERTAIN man had a Donkey, which had carried the corn-sacks to the mill day after day for many a long year ; but his strength was going, and he was growing more and more unfit for work. Then his master began to think how he might best save his keep ; but the Donkey, seeing that no good wind was blowing, ran away and set out on the road to Bremen.

“There,” he thought, “I can surely be town musician.” When he had walked some distance, he found a Hound lying in the road, gasping like one who had run till he was tired.

“What are you gasping so for, you big fellow ?” asked the Donkey.

“Ah,” replied the Hound, “I am old, and daily grow weaker, and because I no longer can hunt, my master wanted to kill me ; so I took to flight ; but now how am I to earn my bread ?”

“I tell you what,” said the Donkey ; “I am going to Bremen, and shall be town musician there ; go with me and also be a musician. I will play the lute, and you shall beat the drum.”

The Hound agreed, and on they went. Be-

fore long they came to a Cat, sitting on the path, with a face like three rainy days!

"Now then, old shaver, what has gone askew with you?" asked the Donkey.

"Who can be merry when his neck is in danger?" answered the Cat. "I am now getting old, and my teeth are worn to stumps, and because I prefer to sit by the fire and spin, rather than hunt mice, my mistress wanted to drown me, so I ran away. But now good advice is scarce. Where am I to go?"

"Go with us to Bremen. You understand night music, so you can be a town musician."

The Cat thought well of it, and went with them. After this the three came to a farmyard, where a Cock was sitting upon the gate, crowing with all his might.

"Your crow goes through and through one," said the Donkey. "What is the matter?"

"I have been foretelling fine weather," said the Cock; "but guests are coming for Sunday, so the housewife has no pity, and has told the cook that she means to eat me in the soup tomorrow, and this evening I am to have my head cut off. Now I am crowing at full pitch while I can."

"Ah, but, red-comb," said the Donkey, "you had better come away with us. We are going to Bremen; you have a good voice, and if we make music together it must be worth something."

The Cock agreed, and all four went on together. They could not reach the town of Bremen in one day, and in the evening they came to a wood where they meant to pass the night. The Donkey and the Hound lay down under a large tree ; the Cat and the Cock settled themselves in the branches ; but the Cock flew right to the top, where he was most safe.

Before he went to sleep he looked round on all four sides, and thought he saw not far off a little spark burning ; so he called out that there must be a house near by, for he saw a light. The Donkey said, —

“ If so, we had better get up and go on, for the shelter here is bad.” The Hound thought that a few bones with some meat on them would do him good too !

So they made their way to the place where the light was ; soon they saw it shine brighter and grow larger, until they came to a well-lighted robber’s house. The Donkey was the biggest, so he went to the window and looked in.

“ What do you see, my gray horse ? ” asked the Cock.

“ What do I see ? ” said the Donkey ; “ why, I see a table spread with good things to eat and drink, and robbers sitting at it and having a good time.”

“ That would be the sort of thing for us,” said the Cock.

“ Yes, yes ; ah, how I wish we were there ! ” said the Donkey.

Then they took counsel together how they could drive away the robbers, and at last they thought of a plan. The Donkey was to place himself with his fore-feet upon the window-ledge, the Hound was to jump on the Donkey’s back, the Cat was to climb upon the Hound, and lastly the Cock was to fly up and perch upon the head of the Cat.

When this was done, at a given signal they began to perform their music together : the Donkey brayed, the Hound barked, the Cat mewed, and the Cock crowed ; then they burst through the window into the room, so that the glass clattered !

At this horrible din the robbers sprang up, thinking that a ghost had come in, and fled in a great fright out into the wood. The four now sat down at the table, well content with what was left, and ate as if they were going to fast for a month.

As soon as the four town musicians had done, they put out the light, and each looked out for a place to sleep in. The Donkey lay down upon some straw in the yard, the Hound lay behind the door, the Cat lay upon the hearth near the warm ashes, and the Cock perched himself upon a beam of the roof ; and being tired with their long walk, they soon went to sleep.

When it was past midnight, and the robbers saw from afar that the light was no longer burning in their house, and all was quiet, the captain said, —

“We ought not to have let ourselves be scared out of our wits ;” and bade one of them go and look into the house. The robber found all still, and went into the kitchen to light a candle ; he took the fiery eyes of the Cat for live coals, and held a match to them to light it.

But the Cat did not like the joke, and flew in his face, spitting and scratching. He was scared out of his wits, and ran to the back door, but the Hound, who lay there, sprang up and bit his leg ; and as he ran across the yard by the straw-heap, the Donkey gave him a smart kick with his hind foot. The Cock, too, who had been waked by the noise, and had become lively, cried down from the beam, —

“Cock-a-doodle-doo !”

Then the robber ran back as fast as he could to his captain, and said, —

“Ah, there is an old witch sitting in the house, who spat on me and scratched my face with her long claws ; and by the door stands a man with a knife, who stabbed me in the leg ; and in the yard there lies a black monster, who beat me with a wooden club ; and above, upon the roof, sits the judge, who called out, ‘Bring the rogue here to me !’ so I got away as well as I could.”

After this the robbers did not trust themselves in the house again ; but it suited the four town musicians of Bremen so well that they did not care to leave it any more. And the mouth of him who last told this story is still warm.

THUMBLING.

THERE was a tailor who had a son, and he was a tailor too. As the little fellow, who happened to be small, was no bigger than a Thumb, he got the name of Thumbling. But he was brave if he was small, and so he said to his father, —

“Father, I must and will go out into the world.”

“That’s right, my son,” said the old man, and took a long darning-needle and made a knob of sealing-wax on it at the candle, “and there is a sword for you to take with you on the way.”

Then Thumbling wanted to have one more meal at home, and hopped into the kitchen to see what his mother had cooked for the last time.

“Mother,” he asked, “what is there to eat to-day?”

“See for yourself,” said she. So Thumbling jumped on to the hearth, and peeped into the dish, but as he stretched his neck in too far the steam from the food caught hold of him and carried him up the chimney. He rode about in the air on the steam for a while, until at last he

sank down to the ground again. Now the little tailor was outside in the wide world, and he traveled about, and went to a master in his craft. But the food was not good enough for him.

"Mistress, if you give us no better food," said Thumbling, "I will go away, and early to-morrow morning I will write with chalk on the door of your house, 'Too many potatoes, too little meat! Good-by, Mr. Potato-King.'"

"What would you have, pray, grasshopper?" said the mistress, and she grew angry, and seized a dish-cloth, and was just going to strike him; but Thumbling crept nimbly under a thimble, peeped out from beneath it, and put his tongue out at the mistress. She took up the thimble, and wanted to get hold of him, but little Thumbling hopped into the cloth, and while she was opening it out and looking for him, he got into a crack in the table.

"Ho, ho, mistress," cried he, and thrust his head out, and when she began to strike him he leapt down into the drawer. At last, however, she caught him and drove him out of the house.

The little tailor journeyed on and came to a great wood, and there he fell in with a band of robbers who meant to steal the King's treasure. When they saw the little tailor, they thought, —

"A little fellow like that can creep through a hole and serve as picklock to us."

“Hollo,” cried one of them, “you giant, will you go to the treasure-chamber with us? You can slip in and throw out the money.”

Thumbling thought a while, and at last he said “yes,” and went with them to the treasure-chamber. Then he looked at the doors above and below, to see if there was any crack in them. Yes, there was one which was broad enough to let him in. He was about to get in, when one of the two sentries who stood before the door saw him, and said, —

“What an ugly spider is creeping there; I will kill it.”

“Let the poor thing alone,” said the other, “it has done you no harm.” Then Thumbling got safely through the crack into the treasure-chamber, opened the window under which the robbers were standing, and threw out to them one piece of gold after another. When the little tailor was in full swing, he heard the King coming, and crept hastily into a hiding-place. The King looked and saw that several solid gold pieces were missing, but could not think who could have stolen them, for locks and bolts were all right, and the chamber seemed empty. Then he went away again, and said to the sentries, —

“Be on the watch; some one is after the money.” So when Thumbling fell to work again, the sentries heard the money moving, and

a sound of klink, klink, klink. They ran swiftly in to seize the thief, but the little tailor, who heard them coming, was still swifter. He leapt into a corner and covered himself with a coin, so that nothing could be seen of him, and at the same time he made fun of the sentries and cried,

“Here am I!”

The sentries ran to where the voice came from, but as they got there he had already hopped into another corner under a coin, and was crying, —

“Ho, ho, here am I!”

The watchmen hurried there, but Thumbling had long ago got into a third corner, and was crying, —

“Ho, ho, here am I!” And thus he made fools of them, and drove them so long round about the treasure-chamber that they were worn out and went away. Then he threw all the gold pieces out one by one, and hopped to the ground on the last.

“Thou art a valiant hero,” said the robbers; “wilt thou be our captain?”

But Thumbling said “no,” he wanted to see the world first. They now divided the gold, but the little tailor asked only for a penny because he could not carry more.

Then he once more buckled on his sword, bade the robbers good-by, and took to the road. First, he went to work with some masters, but

he had no liking for that, and at last he hired himself as man-servant in an inn. The maids, however, could not endure him, for he saw all that they did in secret, without their seeing him. He told their master and mistress what food they had taken off the plates, and carried away out of the cellar, for themselves. Then said they, —

“Wait, and we will pay you off!” and planned to play him a trick. Soon when one of the maids was cutting the grass, and saw Thumbling jumping about and creeping up and down the plants, she mowed him up quickly with the grass, tied all in a great cloth, and threw it to the cows.

Now a great black cow swallowed him down without hurting him. But he did not like being in the cow, for it was quite dark and there was no candle burning. When the cow was milked he cried, —

“Strip, strap, strull,
Will the pail soon be full?”

But the milking made such a noise that he could not be heard. After this the master of the house came into the cow-yard and said, —

“You may have that cow killed to-morrow.” Then Thumbling was so scared that he cried out in a clear voice, —

“Let me out first, for I am shut up inside her.” The master heard him quite well, but did not know where the voice came from.

“Where are you?” he asked.

“In the black cow,” said Thumbling, but the master did not make out what he said, and went out.

Next morning the cow was killed. By good luck Thumbling did not meet with one blow at the cutting up and chopping; he got among the sausage-meat. And when the butcher came in and began his work, he cried out with all his might, —

“Don’t chop too deep; don’t chop too deep; I am in here.”

No one heard this, the chopping-knife made such a noise. Now poor Thumbling was in trouble, but trouble makes one sharp, and he dodged so quickly between blows that they did not touch him, and he got out with a whole skin. Still he could not get away; there was nothing for it, and he had to let himself be put into a black-pudding with the bits of bacon. Then the black-pudding was hung up in the chimney to be smoked, and there time did hang very heavy on his hands.

At last in winter the black-pudding was taken down again, as it had to be set before a guest. When the housewife was cutting it in slices, Thumbling took care not to stretch out his head too far lest a bit of it should be cut off; at last he saw his chance and jumped out.

The little tailor would not stay any longer in

a house where he fared so ill, but at once set out on his journey again. But he was not safe long. In the open country he met with a fox who snapped him up.

"Hollo, Mr. Fox," cried the little tailor, "it is I who am sticking in your throat; set me free."

"You are right," answered the Fox. "You are next to nothing to me, and if you will promise me the fowls in your father's yard I will let you go."

"With all my heart," replied Thumbling. "You shall have all the cocks and hens; I give you my word." Then the Fox let him go again, and carried him home.

When the father once more saw his dear son, he gladly gave the Fox all the fowls he had.

"For this I too bring you a good bit of money," said Thumbling, and gave his father the penny he had earned on his travels.

"But why did the fox get the poor chickens to eat?"

"Oh, you goose, your father would surely love his child far more than the fowls in the yard!"

THE SIX SWANS.

ONCE upon a time a King was hunting in a great wood, and he chased a wild beast so fast and so far that none of his men could follow him. When evening drew near he stopped and looked about, and saw that he had lost his way. He tried to find a way out, but could find none. Then he caught sight of an old woman with a head which kept *nid, nid, nodding*. She came toward him, but she was a witch.

"Good woman," said he to her, "can you not show me the way through the wood?"

"Oh, yes, Lord King," she answered, "I can and I will if you in turn will do one thing for me. If you will not, you must stay here and starve."

"What is it?" asked the King.

"I have a daughter," said the old woman, "who is as beautiful as any one in the world; if you will make her your Queen, I will show you the way out of the wood." In his sad plight the King agreed, and the old woman led him to her little hut, where her daughter was sitting by the fire. She met the King as if she had been looking for him, and he saw that she

was very beautiful, but still she did not please him, and he could not look at her without secret horror. After he had taken the maiden up on his horse, the old woman showed him the way, and the King reached his royal palace again, and there they were married, the King and the maid.

The King had already been married once, and had by his first wife seven children, six boys and a girl, whom he loved better than anything else in the world. As he now feared that the new Queen might not treat them well, and even do them some harm, he took them to a lonely castle which stood in the midst of a wood. It was so hidden, and the way was so hard to find, that he himself would not have found it if a wise woman had not given him a wonderful ball of yarn.

When he threw it down before him, it unwound itself and showed him his path. But the King went so often to his dear children that the Queen became curious, and wanted to know what he did when he was quite alone in the wood. She gave a great deal of money to his servants, and they told her, and told her also of the ball which alone could point out the way.

And now she knew no rest until she had learnt where the King kept the ball of yarn; then she made little shirts of white silk, and as she was a witch like her mother, she sewed a

charm inside them. Then when the King next rode forth to hunt, she took the little shirts and went into the wood, and the ball showed her the way.

The children, who saw from afar that some one was coming, thought it was their dear father, and full of joy ran to meet him. Then she threw one of the little shirts over each of them, and no sooner had the shirts touched their bodies than they were changed into swans, and flew away over the wood.

The Queen went home quite pleased, and thought she had got rid of the children, but the girl had not run out with her brothers, and the Queen knew nothing about her. Next day the King went to visit his children, but he found no one but the little girl.

"Where are your brothers?" asked the King.

"Alas, dear father," she answered, "they have gone away and left me alone!" and she told him that she had seen from her window how her brothers had flown away over the wood in the shape of swans; and she showed him the feathers, which they had let fall in the yard, and which she had picked up.

The King was sad, but he did not think the Queen had done this wicked deed, and as he feared the girl would also be stolen away from him, he wanted to take her away with him. But she was afraid of the Queen, and begged

the King to let her stay just this one night more in the castle. The poor girl thought, —

“I can no longer stay here. I will go and seek my brothers.” So when night came she ran away, and went straight into the wood. She walked all night, and next day also, without stopping, until she could not go one step farther. Then she saw a hut, and went into it, and found a room with six little beds. She did not dare to get into any one of them, but crept under one, and lay down on the hard ground. There she meant to lie all night, but just before sunset she heard wings, and saw six Swans come flying in at the window. They dropped to the ground and blew at each other, and blew all the feathers off, and their swan’s skins stripped off like a shirt.

Then the maiden looked at them and knew her brothers, and was glad and crept forth from under the bed. The brothers were not less glad to see their little sister, but their joy was short.

“You cannot stay here,” they said to her. “This is a robbers’ hut; if they come home and find you, they will kill you.”

“But can you not take care of me?” asked the little sister.

“No,” they replied, “only for one quarter of an hour each evening can we lay aside our swan’s skins and have our real bodies; after that,

we are once more turned into swans." The little sister wept and said, —

"Can you not be set free?"

"Alas, no," they answered, "the way is too hard! For six years you may not speak nor laugh, and in that time you must sew together six little shirts of starwort for us. And if one single word falls from your lips, all your work will be lost." And when the brothers had said this, the quarter of an hour was over, and they flew out of the window again as Swans.

Now the maiden said to herself she would set her brothers free, if it cost her life. She left the hut, went into the midst of the wood, climbed up into a tree, and there passed the night. Next morning she went out and gathered starwort and began to sew. She could not speak to any one, and she did not wish to laugh; she sat there and looked at nothing but her work.

When she had already spent a long time there, it came to pass that the King of the country was hunting in the forest, and his huntsmen came to the tree on which the maiden was sitting. They called to her and said, —

"Who are you?" But she made no answer. "Come down to us," said they. "We will not do you any harm." She only shook her head.

As they kept on talking she threw her golden necklace down to them, and thought to content them thus. They kept on asking her, and then

she threw her girdle down to them ; and as this did not help matters, she threw down one pretty thing after another. At last the huntsmen climbed the tree and fetched the maiden down, and led her before the King. The King asked,

“ Who are you ? What are you doing in the tree ? ”

But she did not answer. He put the question in every language he knew, but she was as mute as a fish. As she was so beautiful, the King’s heart was touched, and he was smitten with a great love for her. He put his mantle on her, took her before him on his horse, and carried her to his castle.

Then he had her dressed in rich clothes, and she shone in her beauty like bright daylight, but no word could be drawn from her. He placed her by his side at table, and she was so sweet and modest that he said, —

“ She is the only girl in the world whom I wish to marry.” And after some days he united himself to her.

Now this King had a wicked mother who did not like his marriage and spoke ill of the young Queen.

“ Who knows,” said she, “ where the creature who can’t speak comes from ? She is not worthy of a king ! ” After a year had passed, when the Queen brought her first child into the world, the old woman took it away from her,

and smeared the Queen's mouth with blood as she slept. Then she went to the King and said the Queen had ate her child up.

The King would not believe it, and would not suffer any one to do her any harm. She sat always sewing at the shirts, and caring for nothing else. The next time, when she again bore a beautiful boy, the false old woman used the same trick, but the King could not bring himself to believe her. He said, —

“She is too pious and good to do anything of that kind ; if she were not dumb, she would tell us all about it.” But when the old woman stole away the newly born child for the third time, and told the same story, and the Queen still said nothing, the King could not help himself. He gave her over to the judges, and she was sentenced to suffer death by fire.

When the day came for her to be burned, it was the last day of the six years during which she was not to speak or laugh. The six shirts were ready, only the left sleeve of the sixth was wanting. So when she was led to the stake, she laid the shirts on her arm ; when she stood on high and the fire was just going to be lighted, she looked around and six Swans came flying through the air toward her.

Then she saw that her help was near, and her heart leapt with joy. The Swans swept toward her and sank down so that she could throw the

shirts over them ; and, as they were touched by them, their swan's skins fell off, and her brothers stood in their own bodies before her, straight and handsome. The youngest only lacked his left arm, and had in the place of it a Swan's wing on his shoulder.

They hugged and kissed each other, and the Queen went to the King, who was greatly moved, and she began to speak and said, —

“ Dearest husband, now I may speak and tell you that I am innocent.” She told him of the trick of the old woman who had taken away her three children and hidden them. Then to the great joy of the King they were brought, and the wicked old woman was bound to the stake, and burnt to ashes. But the King and the Queen with their six brothers lived many years in happiness and peace.

THE SEA MOUSE.

THERE was once upon a time a Princess who lived in a great castle. She had one room with twelve windows, which looked twelve different ways; when she climbed up to it and looked around her, she could see over her whole kingdom. When she looked out of the first, her sight was more keen than that of any other human being; from the second she could see still better, from the third more clearly still, and so it went on, until the twelfth, from which she saw everything above the earth and under the earth, and nothing at all could be kept secret from her.

She was a proud princess and would obey no one; she wished to keep the power for herself alone, so she caused it to be given out that no one should ever be her husband who could not hide himself from her so surely that it should be quite impossible for her to find him. If any one tried this, and was found out by her, he was to have his head cut off, and stuck on a post.

Ninety-seven posts with the heads of dead men on them were already standing before the castle, and no one had come forward for a long

time. The Princess was highly pleased, and thought to herself, —

“Now I shall be free as long as I live.” Then three brothers came before her, and said they would like to try their luck. The eldest thought he would be quite safe if he crept into a lime-pit; but she saw him from the first window, made him come out, and had his head cut off. The second crept into the cellar of the palace; but she saw him also from the first window, and his fate was sealed. His head was placed on the ninety-ninth post.

Then the youngest came to her and begged her to give him a day to think it over, and also to be so kind as to overlook it if she should happen to find him twice, but if he failed the third time, she was to cut his head off. As he was handsome, and begged hard, she said, —

“Yes, I will grant you that, but you will not succeed.”

Next day he thought for a long time how he should hide himself, but all in vain. Then he took his gun and went out hunting. He saw a Raven, took a good aim at him, and was just going to fire, when the bird cried, —

“Don’t shoot; I will make it worth your while to leave me alive.” He put his gun down, went on, and came to a lake, where he saw a large Fish which had come up from the depths below to the top of the water. When he had aimed at it, the Fish cried, —

“Don’t shoot, and I will make it worth your while.” He let it dive down again, went on, and met a Fox which was lame. He fired and missed it, and the Fox cried, —

“You had much better come here and draw the thorn out of my foot for me.” He did this; but when he wanted to kill the Fox and skin it, the Fox said, —

“Stop, and I will make it worth your while.” The youth let him go, and then went home, for it was evening.

Next day he was to hide himself; he puzzled his brains over it, but he did not know where he should go. He went into the wood to the Raven, and said, —

“I let you live on, so now tell me where I am to hide myself, so that the King’s daughter shall not see me.” The Raven hung his head and thought it over for a long time. At last he croaked, —

“I have it.” He fetched an egg out of his nest, cut it into two parts, and shut the youth inside it; then he made it whole again, and sat on it. When the King’s daughter went to the first window she could not find him, nor could she from the others, and she began to be uneasy, but from the eleventh she saw him. She ordered the Raven to be shot, and the egg to be brought and broken, and the youth had to come out. She said, —

“For once I will let you go, but if you do not do better than this, you are lost!”

Next day he went to the lake, called the Fish to him, and said, —

“I let you live, now tell me where to hide myself so that the King’s daughter may not see me.” The Fish thought for a while, and at last cried, —

“I have it! I will shut you up in my stomach.” So the Fish gulped him, and went down to the bottom of the lake. The King’s daughter looked out of one window after another; even from the eleventh she did not see him, and began to be troubled; but at last from the twelfth she saw him. She had the Fish caught and killed, and then the youth stood before her. Any one can guess what a state of mind he was in. She said, —

“Twice I have let you off, but you may be sure your head will be set on the hundredth post.” On the last day, he went with a heavy heart into the country, and met the Fox.

“You know how to find all kinds of hiding-places,” said he; “I let you live; now tell me where I shall hide myself so that the King’s daughter shall not find me.”

“That’s a hard task,” answered the Fox, looking very wise. At last he cried, —

“I have it!” and went with him to a spring; there he dipped himself in it, and came out as a

stall-keeper in the market, and dealer in animals. The youth had to dip himself in the water also, and was changed into a small Sea Mouse. The merchant went into the town, and showed the pretty little animal, and many persons came together to see it.

At last the King's daughter came too, and as she liked it very much, she bought it, and gave the merchant a good deal of money for it. Before he gave the Sea Mouse over to her, he said to it, —

“When the King's daughter goes to the window, creep quickly under the braids of her hair.”

And now the time came when she was to search for him. She went to one window after another in turn, from the first to the eleventh, and did not see him. When she did not see him from the twelfth either, she was full of trouble and anger, and shut it down so hard that the glass in every window was broken into a thousand pieces, and the whole castle shook. She went back, and felt the Sea Mouse beneath the braids of her hair. She seized it, and threw it on the ground, crying out, —

“Away with you! get out of my sight!” It ran to the merchant, and both of them hurried to the spring; they plunged into it, and got back their true forms.

The youth thanked the Fox, and said, —

“ The Raven and the Fish are fools by the side of you ; you know the right tune to play.”

The youth went straight to the palace. The Princess was already looking for him, and had nothing more to say. There was a wedding, and now he was king, and lord of all the kingdom. He never told her where he had hidden himself for the third time, and who had helped him ; so she thought he had done everything by his own skill, and she had a great respect for him, for she said to herself, —

“ He is able to do more than I.”

THE STAR-MONEY.

ONCE on a time there was a little girl ; her father and mother were dead, and she was so poor that she no longer had any little room to live in, or bed to sleep in ; at last she had nothing but the clothes she was wearing, and a little bit of bread in her hand, which some kind soul had given her.

She was, however, good and pious. And as she was thus left alone by all the world, she went forth into the open country, trusting in the good God. Then a poor man met her, who said, —

“ Ah, give me something to eat, I am so hungry ! ” She gave him the whole of her piece of bread, and said, —

“ May God bless it to thy use,” and went on. Then came a child, who cried and said, —

“ My head is so cold ; give me something to cover it with.” So she took off her hood and gave it to him ; and when she had walked a little farther, she met another child who had no jacket and was frozen with the cold. Then she gave it her own jacket ; and a little farther on one begged for a frock, and she gave away that also.

At last she got into a wood, and it had already become dark, and there came yet another child, and asked for a little shirt, and the good little girl thought to herself, —

“It is a dark night and no one sees me; I can very well give my little shirt away,” and took it off, and gave away that also. And as she so stood, and had not one single thing left, suddenly some stars from heaven fell down, and she saw they were hard, smooth pieces of money; and although she had just given her little shirt away, there was a new one made of the very finest linen. Then she gathered the pieces of money into this, and was rich all the days of her life.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

THERE was once a man who had three sons, and nothing else in the world but the house in which he lived. Now each of the sons wished to have the house after his father's death ; but the father loved them all alike, and did not know what to do ; he did not wish to sell the house, because it had belonged to his father, else he might have sold it and divided the money amongst them. At last a plan came into his head, and he said to his sons, —

“ Go into the world, and try each of you to learn a trade, and, when you all come back, he who does the best at his trade shall have the house.”

The sons were well content with this, and the eldest said he would be a blacksmith, the second a barber, and the third a fencing-master. They fixed a time when they should all come home again, and then each went his way.

It chanced that they all found skillful masters, who taught them their trades well. The blacksmith had to shoe the King's horses, and he thought to himself, —

“ The house is mine, without doubt.”

The barber shaved only great people, and he, too, already looked upon the house as his own. The fencing-master got many a blow, but he only bit his lip, and let nothing vex him; "For," said he to himself, "if you are afraid of a blow, you 'll never win the house."

When the time had come, the three brothers came back home to their father; but they did not know how they were to show off their trades, for there were no horses to be shod, every one shaved himself, and no one knew how to fence. So they sat and talked about it. As they were sitting thus, all at once a hare came running across the field.

"Ah, ha, just in time!" said the barber. So he took his basin and soap, and lathered away until the hare came up; then he soaped and shaved off the hare's whiskers whilst he was running at the top of his speed; and he did not even cut his skin or injure a hair on his body.

"Well done!" said the old man, "your brothers will have to do something famous, or the house will be yours."

Soon after, up came a nobleman in his coach, dashing along at full speed.

"Now you shall see what I can do, father," said the blacksmith; so away he ran after the coach, took all four shoes off the feet of one of the horses whilst he was galloping, and put on him four new shoes without stopping him.

“ You are a fine fellow, and as clever as your brother,” said his father ; “ I do not know to which I ought to give the house.” Then the third son said, —

“ Father, let me have my turn, if you please ;” and, as it was beginning to rain, he drew his sword, and swung it backwards and forwards above his head so fast that not a drop fell upon him. It rained harder and harder, till at last it came down in a flood ; but he only waved his sword faster and faster, and was as dry as if he were sitting in a house. When his father saw this he was amazed, and said, —

“ This is the masterpiece, the house is yours ! ”

His brothers were satisfied with this, as was agreed beforehand ; and, as they loved one another very much, they all three stayed together in the house ; they followed their trades, and, as they had learnt them so well and were so clever, they earned a great deal of money.

Thus they lived together happily until they grew old ; and at last, when one of them fell sick and died, the two others grieved so sorely about it that they also fell ill, and soon after died. And because they had been so clever, and had loved one another so much, they were all laid in the same grave.

THE SINGING, SOARING LARK.

THERE was once on a time a man who was about to set out on a long journey; he asked his three daughters what he should bring back with him for them. The eldest wished for pearls, the second wished for diamonds, but the third said, —

“Dear father, I should like a singing, soaring Lark.” The father said, —

“Yes, if I can get it, you shall have it,” kissed all three, and set out. Now when the time had come for him to be on his way home again, he had brought pearls and diamonds for the two eldest, but he had sought in vain for a singing, soaring Lark for the youngest, and he was very unhappy about it, for she was his favorite child.

His road lay through a wood, and in the midst of it was a splendid castle, and near the castle stood a tree, but quite on the top of the tree he saw a singing, soaring Lark.

“Aha, you come just at the right moment!” he said with great joy, and called to his servant to climb up and catch the little creature. But as he drew near the tree, a Lion leapt from be-

neath it, shook himself, and roared till the leaves on the tree trembled.

"I will eat up any one who tries to steal my singing, soaring Lark," he cried. Then the man said, —

"I did not know that the bird belonged to you. I will make amends for the wrong I have done and give you a large sum of money ; only spare my life." The Lion said, —

"Nothing can save you, unless you will promise to give me for my own the first who meets you on your return home ; but if you will do that, I will grant you your life, and you shall have the bird for your daughter, into the bargain." The man said, —

"That might be my youngest daughter ; she loves me best, and always runs to meet me on my return home." But the servant was in great fear, and said, —

"Why should your daughter be the very one to meet you ? It might as easily be a cat or a dog." Then the man let himself be persuaded, took the singing, soaring Lark, and promised to give the Lion whatever should first meet him on his return home.

When he reached home and entered his house, the first who met him was no other than his youngest and dearest daughter ; she came running up, and kissed him, and when she saw that he had brought with him a singing, soaring

Lark, she was beside herself with joy. But the father could not rejoice ; he began to weep, and said, —

“My dearest child, I have bought the little bird at a very high price. In return for it, I have had to promise you to a savage Lion, and when he has you he will tear you in pieces and eat you up ;” and he told her all, just as it had happened, and begged her not to go there, come what might. But she said, —

“Dearest father, indeed your promise must be kept. I will go to the tree and soften the heart of the Lion, so that I may come back to you safely.” Next morning she had the road pointed out to her, took leave, and went bravely out into the wood. Now the Lion was an enchanted prince, and was by day a lion, and all his people were lions with him, but in the night they took back their human shapes. On her arrival she was kindly welcomed and led into the castle. When night came, the Lion turned into a handsome man, and they had a great wedding. They lived happily together, stayed awake at night, and slept in the daytime. One day he came and said, —

“To-morrow there is a feast in your father’s house, because your eldest sister is to be married, and if you are inclined to go there, my lions shall go with you.” She said, —

“Yes, I should very much like to see my

father again," and went with the lions. There was great joy when she came, for they had all believed that she had been torn in pieces by the Lion, and had long ceased to live. But she told them what a handsome husband she had, and how well off she was; she stayed with them while the wedding-feast lasted, and then went back again to the wood.

When the second daughter was about to be married, and she was again asked to the wedding, she said to the Lion, —

"This time I will not be alone; you must come with me." The Lion said that the risk was too great, for if when there a ray from a burning candle fell on him, he would be changed into a dove, and for seven years long would have to fly about with the doves. She said, —

"Ah, but do come with me; I will take great care of you and guard you from all light." So they went away together, and took with them their little child as well. She had a chamber built so strong and thick that no ray could pierce it; in this he was to shut himself up when the candles were lit for the wedding-feast.

But the door was made of green wood, which warped and left a little crack which no one saw. There was a splendid wedding, but when the people with all their candles and torches came back from church, and passed by this chamber, a ray about the breadth of a hair fell on the

King's son ; when this ray touched him, he was changed in an instant, and when his wife came in and looked for him, she did not see him, but a white Dove was sitting there. The Dove said to her, —

“ For seven years must I fly about the world, but at every seventh step that you take I will let fall a drop of red blood and a white feather, and these will show you the way, and if you follow the trace you can set me free.” At that the Dove flew out at the door, and she followed him, and at every seventh step a drop of red blood and a little white feather fell down and showed her the way.

So she went further and further in the wide world, never looking about her or resting, and the seven years were almost past ; then she was glad and thought that they would soon be free, and yet they were so far from it !

Once when they were thus moving onward, no little feather and no drop of red blood fell, and when she raised her eyes the Dove was nowhere to be seen. And as she thought to herself, —

“ In this no man can help me,” she climbed up to the Sun, and said to him, —

“ Thou shinest into every crack, and over every peak ; hast not thou seen a white Dove flying ? ”

“ No,” said the Sun, “ I have seen none, but

I give thee a casket ; open it when thou art in sorest need." Then she thanked the Sun, and went on until evening came and the Moon appeared ; she then asked her, —

"Thou shinest the whole night through, and on every field and forest ; hast thou not seen a white Dove flying ?"

"No," said the Moon, "I have seen no Dove, but here I give thee an egg ; break it when thou art in great need." She thanked the Moon, and went on until the Night Wind came up and blew on her ; then she said to it, —

"Thou blowest over every tree and under every leaf ; hast thou not seen a white Dove flying ?"

"No," said the Night Wind, "I have seen none, but I will ask the three other winds ; perhaps they have seen it." The East Wind and the West Wind came, and had seen nothing, but the South Wind said, —

"I have seen the white Dove ; it has flown to the Red Sea ; there it has become a Lion again, for the seven years are over, and the Lion is there fighting with a Dragon ; for the Dragon is an enchanted Princess." The Night Wind then said to her, —

"I will tell thee what to do ; go to the Red Sea ; on the right bank are some tall reeds ; count them, break off the eleventh, and strike the Dragon with it, then the Lion will be able

to conquer it, and both then will regain their human form. After that, look round and thou wilt see the Griffin which is by the Red Sea; swing thyself, with thy beloved, upon his back, and the bird will carry you over the sea to your own home. Here is a nut for thee; when thou art above the middle of the sea, let the nut fall; it will at once shoot up, and a tall nut-tree will grow out of the water on which the Griffin may rest; for if he cannot rest, he will not be strong enough to carry you across, and if thou dost forget to throw down the nut, he will let you fall into the sea."

Then she went and found everything as the Night Wind had said. She counted the reeds by the sea, and cut off the eleventh; she struck the Dragon with it and the Lion overcame the Dragon, and at once both of them had again their human shapes.

But when the Princess, who had before been the Dragon, was set free from enchantment, she took the youth by the arm, seated herself on the Griffin, and carried him off with her. There stood the poor maiden who had wandered so far and was again forsaken. She sat down and cried, but at last she took courage, and said, —

"Still I will go as far as the wind blows and as long as the cock crows, until I find him;" — and she went forth by long, long roads, until at last she came to the castle where both of them

were living together ; there she heard that soon a feast was to be held, for they were to have their wedding, but she said, —

“ I will not despair,” and opened the casket that the Sun had given her. A dress lay therein as brilliant as the sun itself. So she took it out and put it on, and went up into the castle, and every one, even the bride herself, looked at her with wonder. The dress pleased the bride so well that she thought it might do for her wedding-dress, and asked if it was for sale ?

“ Not for money or land,” she answered, “ but for flesh and blood.” The bride asked her what she meant by that ; then she said, —

“ Let me sleep a night in the chamber where the bridegroom sleeps.” The bride would not, yet wanted very much to have the dress ; at last she agreed, but the Page was to give the Prince a sleeping-draught. When it was night, therefore, and the youth was already asleep, she was led into the chamber ; she sat by the bed, and said, —

“ I have followed you for seven years. I have been to the Sun and the Moon, and the four winds, and have inquired for you, and have helped you against the Dragon ; will you, then, quite forget me ?” But the Prince slept so soundly that it only seemed to him as if the wind were whistling outside in the fir-trees.

So when day broke the maiden was led out

again, and had to give up the golden dress. And as that even had been of no avail, she was sad, went out into a meadow, sat down there, and wept. While she was sitting there, she thought of the egg which the Moon had given her; she opened it, and there came out a clucking hen with twelve chickens all of gold, and they ran about chirping, and crept again under the old hen's wings; nothing more beautiful was ever seen in the world!

Then she arose, and drove them through the meadow before her, until the bride looked out of the window. The little chickens pleased the bride so much that she at once came down and asked if they were for sale.

"Not for money or land, but for flesh and blood; let me sleep another night in the chamber where the bridegroom sleeps." The bride said, —

"Yes," meaning to cheat her as on the former evening. But when the Prince went to bed he asked the Page what the murmuring and rustling in the night had been? On this the Page told all; that he had been forced to give him a sleeping-draught, because a poor girl had slept secretly in the chamber, and that he was to give him another that night. The Prince said, —

"Pour out the draught by the bedside." At night the maiden was again led in, and when she began to relate how ill all had fared with

her, he knew at once his beloved wife by her voice, and sprang up, and cried, —

“Now I really am free! I have been as it were in a dream, for the strange princess has bewitched me so that I have been made to forget you, but I am now set free from the spell at the right time.”

Then they both left the castle secretly in the night, for they feared the father of the Princess, who was a sorcerer; they seated themselves on the Griffin, which bore them across the Red Sea, and when they were in the midst of it, she let fall the nut. A tall nut-tree grew up, whereon the bird rested, and then carried them home, where they found their child, who had grown tall and beautiful, and they all lived together happily until their death.

THE VALIANT LITTLE TAILOR.

ONE summer morning a little Tailor was sitting on his table by the window; he was in good spirits, and sewed with all his might. There came a woman down the street crying, —

“Good jams, cheap! Good jams, cheap!” This rang pleasantly in the Tailor’s ears; he stretched his little head out of the window, and called, —

“Come up here, dear woman; here you will get rid of your goods.” The woman came up the three steps to the Tailor with her heavy basket, and he made her unpack the whole of the pots for him. He looked closely at all of them, lifted them up, put his nose to them, and at last said, —

“The jam seems to me to be good, so weigh me out four ounces, dear woman, and if it is even a quarter of a pound I will take it.” The woman, who had hoped to find a good sale, gave him what he asked, but went away quite angry and grumbling to herself.

“Now, God bless the jam to my use,” cried the little Tailor, “and give me health and strength;” so he brought the bread out of the

cupboard, cut a piece off the loaf, and spread the jam over it. "This won't taste bitter," said he, "but I will just finish the jacket before I take a bite."

He laid the bread near him, sewed on, and in his joy made bigger and bigger stitches. Now the smell of the sweet jam rose to the wall, where the flies were sitting in great numbers, so that they were drawn to it in hosts.

"Hola! who asked you in?" said the little Tailor, and drove the unbidden guests away. But the flies would not be turned away; they came back again more and more of them. Then the little Tailor lost all patience, and got a bit of cloth from the hole under his work-table. "Wait," said he, "and I will give it to you," and so struck at them. When he drew the cloth away and counted, there lay before him no fewer than seven flies, dead and with legs stretched out.

"Art thou a fellow of that sort?" said he, and could not help admiring his own bravery. "The whole town shall know of this!" And the little Tailor made haste to cut himself a girdle, stitched it, and worked on it in large letters, "Seven at one stroke!"

"What, the town!" he went on; "the whole world shall hear of it!" and his heart wagged with joy like a lamb's tail. The Tailor put on the girdle, and went forth into the world, for

he thought his workshop was too small for his valor. Before he went away, he looked about in the house to see if there was anything he could take with him ; he found nothing but an old cheese, and that he put in his pocket. In front of the door he saw a bird which had got caught in the thicket. That had to go into his pocket with the cheese.

Now he took to the road boldly, and as he was light and nimble, he did not tire. The road led him up a mountain, and when he had reached the highest point of it, there sat a great Giant looking about him quite at ease. The little Tailor went bravely up, spoke to him, and said, —

“ Good day, comrade, so you are sitting there looking out over the wide world ! I am just on my way thither, and want to try my luck. Would you like to go with me ? ” The Giant looked with scorn at the Tailor, and said, —

“ You rag-bag ! You snipe, you ! ”

“ Oh, indeed ! ” answered the little Tailor, and unbuttoned his coat, and showed the Giant the girdle. “ There mayst thou read what kind of a man I am ! ” The Giant read, “ Seven at one stroke, ” and thought they had been men whom the Tailor had killed, and began to feel a little respect for the tiny fellow. Still, he wished to try him first, and took a stone in his hand and squeezed it so that water dropped out of it.

"Do you do that," said the Giant, "if you have strength enough!"

"Is that all?" said the Tailor, "that is child's play with me!" and put his hand into his pocket, brought out the soft cheese, and pressed it until the milk ran out of it. "Faith," said he, "that was a little better, was n't it?"

The Giant did not know what to say, and could not believe it of the little man. Then the Giant picked up a stone and threw it so high that the eye could scarcely follow it.

"Now, little mite of a man, do that likewise."

"Well thrown," said the Tailor; "but after all the stone came down to earth again. I will throw you one which shall never come back at all," and he put his hand into his pocket, took out the bird, and threw it into the air. The bird, glad to be free, rose, flew away, and did not come back. "How does that shot please you, comrade?" asked the Tailor.

"You really can throw," said the Giant; "but now we will see if you are able to carry as much as I." He took the little Tailor to a great oak-tree which lay there felled on the ground, and said, "If you are strong enough, help me to carry the tree out of the forest."

"All ready," said the little man; "do you take the trunk on your shoulders, and I will go to the other end and raise up the top part; that is the heaviest." The Giant took the trunk on his

shoulder, but the Tailor seated himself on a branch, and the Giant, who could not look round, had to carry away the whole tree, and the little Tailor into the bargain : he behind, was quite merry and happy, and whistled the song, —

“ Three tailors rode forth from the gate,”

as if carrying the tree were child’s play. The Giant, after he had dragged the heavy burden part of the way, could go no farther, and cried, —

“ Hark you, I shall have to let the tree fall ! ”
The Tailor sprang nimbly down, seized the tree with both arms as if he had been carrying it, and said to the Giant, —

“ You are such a big fellow, and yet you cannot even carry the tree ! ”

They went on together, and as they passed a cherry-tree, the Giant took hold of the top of the tree where the ripest fruit was hanging, bent it down, gave it into the Tailor’s hand, and bade him eat. But the little Tailor was much too weak to hold the tree, and when the Giant let it go, it sprang back again, and the Tailor was hurried up into the air with it. When he had fallen down again without injury, the Giant said, —

“ What is this ? Have you not strength enough to hold the weak twig ? ”

“ There is no lack of strength,” answered the

little Tailor. "Do you think that could be anything to a man who has struck down seven at one blow? I leapt over the tree because the huntsmen are shooting down there in the thicket. Jump as I did, if you can do it." The Giant tried, but could not get over the tree; so in this also the Tailor kept the upper hand. The Giant said, —

"If you are such a valiant fellow, come with me into our cavern and spend the night with us." The little Tailor was willing, and went after him. When they went into the cave, other giants were sitting there by the fire, and each of them had a roasted sheep in his hand and was eating it. The little Tailor looked round and said to himself, —

"It is much more roomy here than in my workshop." The Giant showed him a bed, and said he was to lie down in it and sleep. The bed was far too big for the little Tailor; he did not lie down in it, but crept into a corner. When midnight came, and the Giant thought the little Tailor was lying in a sound sleep, he got up, took a great iron bar and broke through the bed with one blow.

"Now I've done for that little fellow," said he to the other giants. As soon as it was light they all went into the forest, and had quite forgotten the little Tailor, when all at once he walked up to them merrily and boldly. The

giants were scared to death ; they were afraid he would strike them all dead, and so they ran away in a great hurry.

The little Tailor went on his way, always following his own pointed nose. After he had walked for a long time, he came to the yard of a palace, and as he was tired he lay down on the grass and fell asleep. As he lay there, the people came and looked him over on all sides, and read on his girdle, —

“ Seven at one stroke.”

“ Ah !” said they, “ what does the great warrior here in the midst of peace ? He must be a mighty lord.” They went and told their story to the King, and said that if war should break out, this would be a valiant man who ought on no account to be allowed to depart. The counsel pleased the King, and he sent one of his courtiers to the little tailor to offer him a place in his army. The messenger waited till the Tailor woke, and then made him the offer.

“ That is the very reason I have come here,” the Tailor replied, “ I am ready to enter the King’s service.” He was shown great honor, and a palace of his own was given him. The soldiers, however, were set against the little Tailor, and wished him a thousand miles away.

“ What is to be the end of this ?” they said amongst themselves. “ If we quarrel with him, and he strikes about him, seven of us will fall at

every blow ; not one of us can stand against him." So they went in a body to the King, and begged to be let out of the army. "We do not wish," said they, "to stay with a man who kills seven at one stroke."

The King was sorry that for the sake of one he should lose all his faithful servants ; he wished he had never set eyes on the Tailor, and would gladly have been rid of him again. But he did not dare send him away, for he feared lest he should strike him and all his people dead, and place himself on the royal throne. He thought about it for a long time, and at last found good counsel.

He sent word to the little Tailor that, as he was such a great warrior, the King had one favor to ask him. In a forest not far off lived two giants, who were robbing, killing, and burning, and no one could get near them without putting himself in danger of death. If the Tailor killed these two Giants, he would give him his only daughter to wife, and half of his kingdom, and one hundred horsemen should go with him to help him.

"That would indeed be a fine thing for a man like me !" thought the little Tailor. "One is not offered a beautiful princess and half a kingdom every day of one's life !" "Oh, yes," he replied, "I will soon put an end to the Giants, and do not need the help of the hun-

dred horsemen to do it; he who can hit seven with one blow has no need to be afraid of two."

The little Tailor went forth, and the hundred horsemen followed him. When he came to the edge of the forest, he said to his followers, —

"Just stay outside here; I will soon finish off the Giants alone." Then he bounded into the forest and looked about right and left. After a while he saw both Giants. They lay sleeping under a tree, and snored so that the branches waved up and down.

The little Tailor filled his two pockets with stones, and climbed up the tree. When he was half way up, he slipped down by a branch, until he sat just above the sleepers, and then let one stone after another fall on the breast of one of the Giants. For a long time the Giant felt nothing, but at last he awoke, pushed his comrade, and said, —

"Why are you knocking me?"

"You must be dreaming," said the other, "I am not knocking you." They lay down to sleep again, and then the Tailor dropped a stone on the second.

"What is the meaning of this?" cried the other. "Why are you pelting me?"

"I am not pelting you," answered the first, growling. They quarreled about it for a time, but as they were weary they let the matter rest, and their eyes closed once more. The little

Tailor began his game again ; he picked out the biggest stone, and threw it with all his might at the breast of the first Giant.

"That is too bad!" cried he, and sprang up like a madman, and pushed his companion against the tree until it shook. The other paid him back in the same coin, and they got into such a rage that they tore up trees and thrashed each other so long, that at last they both fell down dead on the ground at the same time. Then the little Tailor leapt down.

"It is a lucky thing," said he, "that they did not tear up the tree on which I was sitting, or I should have had to spring on to another like a squirrel ; but we tailors are nimble." He drew out his sword and gave each of them a couple of thrusts in the breast, and then went out to the horsemen and said, "The work is done ; I have given both of them their finishing stroke, but it was hard work ! They tore up trees in their sore need, and defended themselves with them, but all that is to no purpose when a man like me comes, who can kill seven at one blow."

"But are you not wounded?" asked the horsemen.

"You need not concern yourself about that," answered the Tailor, "they have not bent one hair of mine." The horsemen would not believe him, and rode into the forest ; there they found

the Giants swimming in their blood, and all round about lay the torn-up trees.

The little Tailor demanded of the King the promised reward ; but the King repented of his promise, and again thought how he could get rid of the hero.

“ Before you receive my daughter, and the half of my kingdom,” said he to him, “ you must perform one more heroic deed. In the forest roams a Unicorn¹ which does great harm, and you must catch it first.”

“ I fear one Unicorn still less than two Giants. Seven at one blow is my way.” He took a rope and an axe with him, went forth into the forest, and again bade those who were sent with him to wait outside. He had not to seek long. The Unicorn soon came toward him, and rushed directly on the Tailor, as if it would spit him on his horn without more ado.

“ Softly, softly ; it can’t be done as quickly as that,” said he, and stood still and waited until the animal was quite close, and then sprang nimbly behind the tree. The Unicorn ran against the tree with all its strength, and struck his horn so fast in the trunk that he had not strength enough to draw it out again, and thus he was caught.

“ Now, I have the bird,” said the Tailor, and came out from behind the tree and put the rope

¹ The unicorn was a fabled one-horned beast.

round the Unicorn's neck, and then with his axe he hewed the horn out of the tree, and when all was ready he led the beast away and took him to the King.

The King still would not give him the promised reward, and made a third demand. Before the wedding the Tailor was to catch him a wild Boar that made great havoc in the forest, and the huntsmen should give him their help.

"Gladly," said the Tailor; "that is child's play!" He did not take the huntsmen with him into the forest, and they were well pleased that he did not, for the wild Boar had more than once met them in such a manner that they had no wish to lie in wait for him. When the Boar caught sight of the Tailor, it ran at him with foaming mouth and whetted tusks, and was about to throw him to the ground, but the active hero sprang into a little building which was near, and up to the window at once, and in one bound out again.

The Boar ran in after him, but the Tailor ran round outside and shut the door behind it; thus the raging beast, which was much too heavy and clumsy to leap out of the window, was caught. The little Tailor called the huntsmen that they might see the prisoner with their own eyes. The King was now, whether he liked it or not, obliged to keep his promise, and give the hero his daughter and the half of his kingdom. Had

he known that it was no hero, but a little Tailor who was standing before him, it would have gone against the grain even more than it did. The wedding was held with great splendor and small joy, and out of a Tailor a king was made.

After some time the young Queen heard her husband say in his dreams at night, —

“Boy make me the jacket, and patch the pantaloons, or else I will rap the yard-measure over your ears.” Thus she found out in what state of life the young lord had been born, and next morning she begged her father to help her to get rid of her husband, who was nothing but a Tailor. The King bade her be easy, and said, —

“Leave your bedroom door open this night, and my servants shall stand outside: when he has fallen asleep, they shall go in, bind him, and take him on board a ship which shall carry him into the wide world.” The woman was satisfied with this; but the King’s armor-bearer, who had heard all, was friendly with the young lord, and told him of the whole plot.

“I’ll look after that business,” said the little Tailor. At night he went to bed with his wife at the usual time, and when she thought he had fallen asleep, she got up, opened the door, and then lay down again. The little Tailor, who was only making believe he asleep, began to cry out in a clear voice, — “Boy, make me the jacket and

patch me the pantaloons, or I will rap the yard-measure over your ears. I smote seven at one blow. I killed two giants, I brought away one unicorn, and caught a wild boar, and am I to fear those who are standing outside the room?"

When these men heard the Tailor speaking thus, they were filled with a great dread, and ran as if the wild huntsman were behind them, and none of them would dare anything further against him. So the little Tailor was a King, and remained one to the end of his life.

THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

THE Wolf and the Fox lived together, and whatever the Wolf wished, that the Fox had to do, for he was the weaker. Now the Fox would gladly have been rid of his master, and as they were going through the wood, the Wolf said, —

“Red-fox, get me something to eat, or else I will eat you up.” Then the Fox said, —

“I know a farmyard where there are two young lambs ; if you like it we will have one of them.” That suited the Wolf, and they went thither, and the Fox stole a little lamb, took it to the Wolf, and went away. The Wolf ate it up, but he wanted the other as well, and went to get it. He was so clumsy about it the mother of the little lamb heard him, and began to cry out, and to bleat so that the Farmer came running up. He found the Wolf, and beat him so that he went to the Fox limping and howling.

“You have done me a bad turn,” said he ; “I wanted to fetch the other lamb, and the old Farmer caught me, and beat me to a jelly.” The Fox replied, —

“Why are you such a glutton ? ”

Next day they again went into the country, and the greedy Wolf once more said, —

“Red-fox, get me something to eat, or I will eat you up.” Then the Fox said, —

“I know a farmhouse where the wife is baking cakes to-night; we will get some of them for ourselves.” They went there, and the Fox slipped round the house, and peeped and sniffed about until he found where the dish was, and then drew down six cakes, and carried them to the Wolf. “There is something for you to eat,” said he to him, and then went his way. The Wolf swallowed down the cakes in an instant, and said, —

“They make me want more,” and went in and tore the whole dish down so that it broke in pieces. This made such a noise that the woman came out, and when she saw the Wolf she called the people, who hurried there, and beat him as long as their sticks would hold together; so with two lame legs he got back howling to the Fox in the wood.

“What a scrape you have got me into!” cried he, “the folks caught me, and tanned my skin for me.” But the Fox replied, —

“Why are you such a glutton?”

On the third day, when they were out together, and the Wolf could only limp along, he said again, —

“Red-fox, get me something to eat, or I will eat you up.” The Fox answered, —

“I know a man who has some salted meat in

a barrel in the cellar ; we will get that." Said the Wolf, —

"I will go when you do, that you may help me if I am not able to get away."

"I am willing," said the Fox, and showed him the by-paths and ways by which at last they reached the cellar. There was plenty of meat there, and the Wolf at once began upon it, and thought, —

"There is time enough before I need leave off!" The Fox liked it also, but looked about everywhere, and often ran to the hole by which they had come in, and tried if his body was still thin enough to slip through it. The Wolf said,

"Dear Fox, tell me why you are running here and there so much, and jumping in and out?"

"I must see that no one is coming," replied the sly fellow. "Don't eat too much!" Then said the Wolf, —

"I shall not leave until the barrel is empty." In the mean time the Farmer, who had heard the noise of the Fox's jumping, came into the cellar. When the Fox saw him he was out of the hole at one bound. The Wolf wanted to follow him, but he had made himself so fat with eating that he could no longer get through, but stuck fast.

Then came the Farmer with a stout stick and struck him dead, but the Fox bounded into the wood, glad to be rid of the old glutton.

THE DEATH OF THE LITTLE HEN.

ONCE upon a time the little Hen went with the little Cock to the nut-heap, and they agreed that the one who found a kernel of a nut should share it with the other. The Hen found a large, large nut, but said nothing about it, meaning to eat the kernel herself. The kernel was so large that she could not swallow it, and it remained sticking in her throat, so that she was afraid she should be choked. Then she cried, —

“Cock, I pray you run as fast as you can, and fetch me some water, or I shall choke.” The little Cock did run as fast as he could to the Well, and said, —

“Well, you are to give me some water; the little Hen is lying on the nut-heap, and she has swallowed a large nut, and is choking.” The Well answered, —

“First run to the Bride, and get her to give you some red silk.” The little Cock ran to the Bride and said, —

“Bride, you are to give me some red silk; I want to give red silk to the Well, the Well is to give me some water, I am to take the water to the little Hen, who is lying on the nut-heap

and has swallowed a great nut-kernel, and is choking with it." The Bride answered, —

"First run and bring me my little wreath, which is hanging on a willow." So the little Cock ran to the willow, and drew the wreath from the branch, and took it to the Bride, and the Bride gave him some red silk for it, which he took to the Well, who gave him some water for it. Then the little Cock took the water to the Hen, but when he got there the Hen had choked and lay there quite dead.

Then the Cock was so sad that he cried aloud, and every animal came to mourn for the little Hen, and six Mice built a little car to carry her to her grave, and when the car was ready they harnessed themselves to it, and the Cock drove. On the way they met the Fox, who said, —

"Where are you going, little Cock?"

"I am going to bury my little Hen."

"May I drive with you?"

"Yes, but seat yourself at the back of the carriage, for in the front my little horses could not drag you." Then the Fox seated himself at the back, and after that the Wolf, the Bear, the Stag, the Lion, and all the beasts of the forest did the same. Then they marched on until they reached the stream.

"How are we to get over?" said the little Cock. A straw was lying by the stream, and it said, —

“I will lay myself straight across, and then you can drive over me.” But when the six Mice came to the bridge, the straw slipped and fell into the water, and the six Mice all fell in and were drowned.

Then they were again in difficulty, and a hot Coal came and said, —

“I am large enough, I will lay myself across, and you shall drive over me.” So the Coal also laid itself across the water, but when it touched it, the Coal hissed, was put out, and died.

When a Stone saw that, it took pity on the little Cock, wished to help him, and laid itself over the water. Then the Cock drew the carriage himself; he got it over and reached the shore with the dead Hen, and was about to draw over the others, who were sitting behind, but there were too many of them; the carriage ran back, and they all fell into the water together, and were drowned. Then the little Cock was left alone with the dead Hen, and dug a grave for her and laid her in it, and made a mound above it, on which he sat down and fretted until he died too, and then every one was dead.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

THERE was once a King who was sick unto death. He had three sons who were made very sad by this, and they went down into the garden and wept. There they met an Old Man who asked why they wept. They told him their father was so ill that he would surely die, for nothing seemed to cure him. Then the Old Man said, —

“I know of one thing more, and that is the water of life; if he drinks of it he will become well again; but it is hard to find.” The eldest said, —

“I will make out to find it,” and went to the sick King, and begged that he might go forth in search of the water of life, for that alone could save him.

“No,” said the King, “the danger is too great. I would rather die.” But he begged so long that the King at last gave him leave. The Prince thought in his heart, —

“If I bring the water, then I shall be best beloved of my father, and shall inherit the kingdom.” So he set out, and when he had ridden forth a little distance he met a Dwarf in the road, who called to him and said, —

“Whither away so fast?”

“Silly shrimp,” said the Prince, tossing his head, “it is nothing to you,” and rode on. But the Dwarf had grown angry, and had wished an evil wish. Soon after this the Prince came into a dark valley, and the farther he rode the closer the mountains drew together; at last the road became so narrow that he could not go a step farther; it was in vain that he tried to turn his horse or to get down from the saddle, and he was shut in there as if in prison.

The sick King waited long for him, but he came not. Then the second son said, —

“Father, let me go forth to seek the water,” and thought to himself, “If my brother is dead, then the kingdom will fall to me.” At first the King would not let him go either, but at last he gave way. So the Prince set out on the same road that his brother had taken, and he too met the Dwarf, who stopped him to ask whither he was going in such haste?

“Little shrimp,” said the Prince, “that is nothing to you,” and rode on without giving him another look. But the Dwarf threw a spell over him, and he, like the other, got into a dark valley, and could not go forward or backward. So it is with proud folk.

As the second son also stayed away, the youngest begged that he might go forth to fetch the water, and at last the King had to let him

go. When he met the Dwarf and was asked whither he was going in such haste, he stopped, and said, —

“I am seeking the water of life, for my father is sick unto death.”

“Do you know, then, where that is to be found?”

“No,” said the Prince.

“As you have borne yourself as is seemly, and not proudly like your false brothers, I will tell you how you may obtain the water of life. It springs from a well in the courtyard of an enchanted castle, but you will not be able to make your way to it, so I will give you an iron wand and two small loaves of bread. Strike three times with the wand on the iron door of the castle, and it will spring open: inside lie two lions with open jaws, but if you throw a loaf to each of them, they will be quiet; then make haste to fetch some of the water of life before the clock strikes twelve, else the door will shut again, and you will be shut up in prison.”

The Prince thanked him, took the wand and the bread, and set out on his way. When he reached the castle, all was as the Dwarf had said. The door sprang open at the third stroke of the wand, and when he had quieted the lions with the bread, he went into the castle, and came to a large and splendid hall. There sat some enchanted Princes with rings on their

fingers. These he drew off. A sword and a loaf of bread were lying there ; and these he carried away.

After this, he went into a room, in which was a beautiful maiden, who was glad when she saw him ; she kissed him, and told him he had set her free and should have the whole of her kingdom ; if he would come back in a year they should be married ; she also told him where the well of the water of life was, and that he was to make haste and draw some of it before the clock struck twelve.

Then he went on, and at last came to a room where there was a beautiful newly made bed, and as he was very tired he lay down and fell asleep.

When he awoke, it was striking a quarter to twelve. He sprang up in a fright, ran to the spring, drew some water in a cup which stood near, and went away quickly. But just as he was passing through the iron door, the clock struck twelve, and the door shut with such violence that it carried away a piece of his heel.

But he was happy that he now had the water of life, and so he went home, and again passed the Dwarf. When the Dwarf saw the sword and the loaf, he said, —

“With these you have won great wealth ; with the sword you can slay whole armies, and the bread will never come to an end.” But the

Prince would not go home to his father without his brothers, and said, —

“ Dear Dwarf, can you not tell me where my two brothers are? They went out before I did in search of the water of life, and have not come back.”

“ They are in prison between two mountains,” said the Dwarf. “ I have made them stay there, because they were so proud.” Then the Prince begged until the Dwarf set them free; but he said to the Prince, —

“ Beware of them, for they have bad hearts.”

When his brothers came, the Prince was glad, and told them how things had gone with him, that he had found the water of life, and had brought a cupful away with him; he had set free a beautiful Princess, too, who was willing to wait a year for him, and then they were to have a fine wedding, and he would receive a great kingdom.

After that they rode on their way, and came by chance upon a land where there was war and a great famine, and the King of that land thought he must perish, so great was the distress of his people. Then the Prince went to him and gave him the loaf, and with it he fed the whole of his kingdom; and then the Prince gave him the sword also, and with that he slew the hosts of his enemies, and could now live in rest and peace.

The Prince then took back his loaf and his sword, and the three brothers rode on. But after this they came to two more countries where there was war and famine, and each time the Prince gave his loaf and his sword to the Kings.

Now he had set free three kingdoms, and after that the three brothers went on board a ship and sailed over the sea. During the passage, the two eldest brothers talked apart and said, —

“The youngest has found the water of life and not we; for that our father will give him the kingdom, — the kingdom which belongs to us, and he will rob us of all our fortune.” Then they began to plot with each other to destroy him. They waited until once when they found him fast asleep; then they poured the water of life out of the cup, and took it for themselves, but into the cup they poured salt sea-water.

Now therefore, when they came home, the youngest took his cup to the sick King in order that he might drink out of it, and be cured. But scarcely had he drunk of the salt sea-water than he became still worse than before.

And as he was unhappy over this, the two eldest brothers came, and said the youngest meant to poison him, but that they had brought him the true water of life, and handed it to him. He had scarcely tasted it when he felt his sick-

ness leaving, and became strong and healthy as in the days of his youth. After that they both went to the youngest, mocked him, and said, —

“ You certainly found the water of life, but you have had the pain, and we the gain ; you should have been sharper, and should have kept your eyes open. We took it from you while you were asleep at sea ; and when a year is over, one of us will go and fetch the beautiful Princess. But beware that you do not tell of this to our father ; indeed, he does not trust you, and if you say a single word you shall lose your life into the bargain, but if you keep silent you may have your life as a gift.”

The old King was angry with his youngest son, and thought he had plotted against his life. So he called the court together, and had them give an order that his son should be secretly shot. Once when the Prince was riding forth to the chase, thinking no evil, the King’s Huntsman had to go with him ; and when they were quite alone in the wood, the Huntsman looked so sad that the Prince said to him, —

“ Dear Huntsman, what ails you ? ” The Huntsman said, —

“ I cannot tell you, and yet I ought.” Then the Prince said, —

“ Say openly what it is ; I will pardon you.”

“ Alas ! ” said the Huntsman, “ I am to shoot

you dead ; the King has ordered me to do it." Then the Prince was shocked, and said, —

"Dear Huntsman, let me live ; there, I give you my royal robes ; give me your common ones in their stead." The Huntsman said, —

"I will gladly do that ; indeed I should not have been able to shoot you." Then they changed clothes, and the Huntsman went back home ; but the Prince went farther into the wood.

After a time three wagons of gold and precious stones came to the King for his youngest son ; they had been sent by the three Kings who had slain their enemies with the Prince's sword, and kept their people alive with his bread, and now wished to show their thanks for it. The old King then thought, —

"Can my son have been innocent ?" and said to his people, "Would that he were still alive ; how it grieves me that I have let him be killed !"

"He still lives," said the Huntsman ; "I could not find it in my heart to carry out your order," and told the King how it had happened. Then a stone fell from the King's heart, and he had a message sent to every country that his son might come back and be taken into favor again.

Now the Princess had had a road made up to her palace bright and golden, and she told her people that he who came riding straight along it to her would be the right wooer, and was to be let in, and whoever rode by the side

of it was not the right one, and was not to be let in.

As the time was now close at hand, the eldest thought he would go to the King's daughter, and give himself out as the one who set her free, and thus win her for his bride, and the kingdom to boot. So he rode forth, and when he came in front of the palace, and saw the splendid golden road, he thought it would be a sin and a shame if he were to ride over that, and he turned aside, and rode on the right side of it. But when he came to the door the servants told him he was not the right man, and was to go away again.

Soon after this the second prince set out, and when he came to the golden road, and his horse had put one foot on it, he thought it would be a sin and a shame to tread a piece of it off; so he turned aside and rode on the left side of it, and when he came to the door the servants told him he was not the right one, and was to go away again.

When at last the year had come to an end, the third son wished to ride out of the wood to his beloved, that he might forget his sorrows with her. So he set out and thought of her so steadily, and wished to be with her so much, that he never saw the golden road at all. His horse rode up the middle of it, and when he came to the door it was opened, and the Princess re-

ceived him with joy ; she said he was the one who set her free, and lord of the kingdom, and they had a fine wedding.

When it was over she told him that his father bade him come to him, for he had forgiven him. So he rode home, and told his father everything ; how his brothers had betrayed him, and how he had for all that kept silence. The old King wished to punish them, but they had put to sea, and never came back as long as they lived.

SWEET PORRIDGE.

THERE was a poor but good little girl who lived alone with her mother, and they no longer had anything to eat. So the child went into the wood and there an old woman met her who was aware of her trouble, and gave her a little pot ; when she said, —

“Cook, little pot, cook,” it would cook good, sweet porridge, and when she said, “Stop, little pot,” it ceased to cook.

The girl took the pot home to her mother, and now they were freed from their poverty and hunger, and ate sweet porridge as often as they chose. Once on a time when the girl had gone out, her mother said, —

“Cook, little pot, cook.” And it did cook, and she ate till she had enough, and then she wanted the pot to stop cooking, but did not know the word.

So it went on cooking, and the porridge rose over the edge ; and still it cooked on, until the kitchen and whole house were full, and then the next house, and then the whole street, just as if it wanted to satisfy the hunger of the whole world, and there was the greatest distress, but no one knew how to stop it.

At last when only one single house was left, the child came home and just said, —

“Stop, little pot,” and it stopped and gave up cooking, and whoever wished to come back to the town had to eat his way back.

PART II.

THE WOLF AND THE SEVEN LITTLE KIDS.

THERE was once on a time an old Goat who had seven little Kids, and loved them with all the love of a mother for her children. One day she wanted to go into the woods and fetch some food. So she called all seven to her and said, —

“Dear children, I have to go into the woods ; be on your guard against the Wolf ; if he come in, he will eat you all up — skin, hair, and all. The wretch often makes believe, but you will know him at once by his rough voice and his black feet.” The Kids said, —

“Dear mother, we will take good care of ourselves ; you may go away without any worry.” Then the old one bleated, and went on her way with an easy mind.

It was not long before some one knocked at the door and cried, —

“Open the door, dear children ; your mother is here, and has brought something back with

her for each of you." But the little Kids knew that it was the Wolf, by the rough voice.

"We will not open the door," cried they. "You are not our mother. She has a soft, pleasant voice, but your voice is rough; you are the Wolf!" Then the Wolf went away and bought himself a great lump of chalk, ate this and made his voice soft with it. Then he came back, knocked at the door of the house, and cried, —

"Open the door, dear children; your mother is here and has brought something back with her for each of you." But the Wolf had laid his black paws against the window, and the children saw them and cried, —

"We will not open the door; our mother has not black feet like you; you are the Wolf!" Then the Wolf ran to a Baker and said, —

"I have hurt my feet, rub some dough over them for me." And when the Baker had rubbed his feet over, the Wolf ran to the Miller and said, —

"Strew some white meal over my feet for me." The Miller thought to himself, "The Wolf wants to deceive some one," and refused; but the Wolf said, —

"If you will not do it, I will eat you up." Then the Miller was afraid, and made his paws white for him. Truly men are like that. So now the wretch went for the third time to the house-door, knocked at it and said, —

“Open the door for me, children ; your dear little mother has come home, and has brought every one of you something back from the woods with her.” The little Kids cried, —

“First show us your paws that we may know if you are our dear little mother.” Then he put his paws in through the window, and when the Kids saw that they were white, they believed all he said was true, and opened the door. But who should come in but the Wolf !

They were scared and tried to hide themselves. One sprang under the table, the second into the bed, the third into the stove, the fourth into the kitchen, the fifth into the cupboard, the sixth under the washing-bowl, and the seventh into the clock-case. But the Wolf found them all, and wasted no time. He swallowed them down his throat one after the other. The youngest in the clock-case was the only one he did not find.

When the Wolf had well eaten, he took himself off, lay down under a tree in the green field outside, and began to sleep. Soon afterward the old Goat came home again from the woods. Ah ! what a sight she saw there ! The house-door stood wide open. The table, chairs, and benches were thrown down, the washing-bowl lay broken to pieces, and the quilts and pillows were pulled off the bed. She sought her children, but they were nowhere to be found. She

called them one after another by name, but no one answered. At last, when she came to the youngest, a soft voice cried, —

“Dear mother, I am in the clock-case.” She took the Kid out, and it told her that the Wolf had come and had eaten all the others. Then you may believe she wept over her poor children.

At last in her grief she went out, and the youngest Kid ran with her. When they came to the field, there lay the Wolf by the tree and snored so loud that the branches shook. The Goat looked at him on every side and saw that something was moving and struggling inside him.

“Ah, heavens,” said she, “is it possible that my poor children, whom he has swallowed for his supper, can be still alive?” Then the Kid had to run home and fetch scissors, and a needle and thread, and the Goat cut open the monster’s stomach, and hardly had she made one cut, than one little Kid thrust its head out, and when she had cut farther, all six sprang out one after another; they were all still alive, and had suffered no harm whatever, for in his greediness the monster had swallowed them down whole. How glad they all were! They hugged their dear mother, and jumped like a tailor at his wedding. The mother, however, said, —

“Now go and look for some big stones, and we will fill the wicked beast’s stomach with them

while he is still asleep." Then the seven Kids dragged the stones to him with all speed, and put as many of them into the Wolf's stomach as they could get in ; and the mother sewed him up again in the greatest haste, so that he was not aware of anything and never once stirred.

When the Wolf at last had had his sleep out, he got on his legs, and as the stones in his stomach made him very thirsty, he wanted to go to a well to drink. But when he began to walk and to move about, the stones in his stomach knocked against each other and rattled. Then cried he, —

" What rumbles, and tumbles
Against my poor bones ?
I thought 't was six kids,
But it 's naught but big stones."

When he got to the well and stooped over the water and was just about to drink, the heavy stones made him fall in and there was no help ; he had to drown. When the seven Kids saw that, they came running to the spot and cried aloud, —

" The Wolf is dead ! The Wolf is dead !"
and danced for joy round about the well with their mother.

THE FOX AND THE HORSE.

A PEASANT had a faithful Horse which had grown old and could do no more work. So his master would no longer give him anything to eat, and said, —

“ I can make no more use of you, but still I mean well by you ; if you prove yourself still strong enough to bring me a Lion here, I will keep you, but now take yourself away out of my stable,” and with that he chased him into the open country. The Horse was sad, and went to the wood to be under cover from the weather. Then the Fox met him and said, —

“ Why do you hang your head so, and go about all alone ? ”

“ Alas,” replied the Horse, “ greed and good service do not dwell together in one house. My master has forgotten what I have done for him for so many years, and because I can no longer plough well, he will give me no more food, and has driven me out.”

“ Without giving you a chance ? ” asked the Fox.

“ The chance was a bad one. He said, if I were still strong enough to bring him a Lion,

he would keep me, but he well knows that I cannot do that." The Fox said, —

"I will help you; just lay yourself down, stretch yourself out, as if you were dead, and do not stir."

The Horse did as the Fox said, and the Fox went to the Lion, who had his den not far off, and said, —

"A dead Horse is lying outside there; just come with me; you can have a rich meal." The Lion went with him, and when they were both standing by the Horse the Fox said, —

"After all it is not very warm for you here — I tell you what — I will fasten it to you by the tail, and then you can drag it into your cave, and eat it in peace."

This advice pleased the Lion: he lay down, and in order that the Fox might tie the Horse fast to him, he kept very quiet. But the Fox tied the Lion's legs together with the Horse's tail, and twisted and fixed all so well and so strongly that no strength could break it. When he had finished his work, he tapped the Horse on the shoulder, and said, —

"Pull, white Horse, pull." Then up sprang the Horse at once, and drew the Lion away with him. The Lion began to roar so that all the birds in the forest flew out in terror, but the Horse let him roar, and drew him and dragged him over the country to his master's door. When

the master saw the Lion, he was of a better mind, and said to the Horse, —

“ You shall stay with me and fare well,” and he gave him plenty to eat until he died.

THE SHOES THAT WERE DANCED TO PIECES.

THERE was once upon a time a King who had twelve daughters, each one more beautiful than the other. They all slept together in one room ; their beds stood side by side, and every night, when they were in them, the King locked the door, and bolted it. But in the morning when he unlocked the door, he saw that their shoes were worn out with dancing, and no one could find out how that had come to pass.

Then the King made known that he who could discover where they danced at night should choose one of them for his wife, and be King after his death ; but that any one who came forward and did not discover it within three days and nights should give up his life.

It was not long before a King's son came forward and said he would try. He was well received, and in the evening was led into a room next to that where the princesses slept. His bed was placed there, and he was to see where they went and danced ; and in order that they might do nothing secretly or go away to some other place, the door of their room was left open.

But the eyelids of the Prince grew heavy as

lead, and he fell asleep ; and when he awoke in the morning all twelve had been to the dance, for their shoes were standing there with holes in the soles. On the second and third nights it fell out just the same, and then his head was struck off without mercy. Many others came after this and tried also, but all failed.

Now it came to pass that a poor Soldier, who had a wound, and could serve no longer, found himself on the road to the town where the King lived. There he met an Old Woman, who asked him where he was going.

“ I hardly know myself,” he said, and added in jest, “ I have half a mind to find out where the princesses danced their shoes into holes ; then I should become King.”

“ That is not so hard,” said the Old Woman, “ you must not drink the wine which will be brought to you at night, and must pretend to be sound asleep.” With that she gave him a little cloak, and said, “ If you put on that, no one can see you, and then you can steal after the twelve.”

When the Soldier had received this good advice, he went into the thing in earnest, took heart, went to the King, and said he would try. He was as well received as the others, and he was given royal clothes to put on. When bedtime came he was led to his room, and the eldest princess came and brought him a cup of wine, but

he had tied a sponge under his chin, and let the wine run down into it, without drinking a drop. Then he lay down, and when he had lain a while, he began to snore, as if in the deepest sleep. The twelve princesses heard that, and laughed, and the eldest said, —

“He, too, might as well have saved his life.”

With that they got up, opened their closets, and brought out pretty dresses; they dressed themselves before the mirrors, and sprang about with joy at the prospect of the dance. Only the youngest said, —

“I know not how it is; you are very happy, but I feel very strange; some evil is about to befall us.”

“You are a goose, you are always afraid,” said the eldest. “Have you forgotten how many kings’ sons have already come here in vain? I had hardly any need to give the Soldier a sleeping-draught; in any case the clown would not have waked up.”

When they were all ready they looked closely at the Soldier, but he had shut his eyes and did not move or stir, so they felt quite secure. The eldest then went to her bed and tapped it; at once it sank into the earth, and one after the other they went down through the hole, the eldest going first.

The Soldier, who had seen everything, waited no longer, put on his little cloak, and went down

last with the youngest. Half way down the steps, he just trod a little on her dress; she was scared at that, and cried out, —

“What is that? who is pulling at my dress?”

“Don’t be so silly!” said the eldest, “you have caught it on a nail.” Then they went all the way down, and when they were at the bottom, they stood in a pretty wood; all the leaves of the trees were of silver, and shone. The Soldier thought, —

“I must carry a token away with me,” and broke off a twig from one of them, at which the tree cracked with a loud snap. The youngest cried out again, —

“Something is wrong; did you hear the crack?” But the eldest said, —

“It is a gun fired for joy, because we have got rid of our prince so quickly.” After that they came into a wood where all the leaves of the trees were of gold; and last into a third where they were of bright diamonds; the soldier broke off a twig from each, which made such a crack each time that the youngest started back in terror, but the eldest still said it was the noise of a gun.

They went on and came to a great lake, and on the lake were twelve little boats, and in each boat sat a handsome prince; all of them were waiting for the twelve, and each took one of

them with him, but the Soldier sat by the youngest. Then her Prince said, —

“I can’t tell why the boat is so much heavier to-day ; I shall have to row with all my strength, if I am to get it across.”

“What should make that,” said the youngest, “but the warm weather ? I feel very warm too.” On the other side of the lake stood a castle, lighted with many lights, and they could hear the music of trumpets and drums.

They rowed over there and went in, and each prince danced with the girl he loved ; but the Soldier danced with them unseen, and when one of them had a cup of wine in her hand he drank it up, so that the cup was empty when she carried it to her mouth ; the youngest was alarmed at this, but the eldest always made her be silent.

They danced there till three o’clock in the morning, when all the shoes were danced into holes, and they were forced to leave off ; the princes rowed them back again over the lake, and this time the Soldier sat by the eldest.

On the shore they took leave of their princes, and said they would come back the next night. When they came to the stairs the Soldier ran on in front and lay down in his bed ; and when the twelve had come up slowly, for they were very tired, he was already snoring so loudly that they could all hear him, and they said, —

“So far, we are safe.” They took off their

beautiful dresses, laid them away, put the worn-out shoes under the bed, and lay down.

Next morning the Soldier did not speak, but thought he would watch the strange goings on, and when night came he again went with them. Everything was done just as it had been done the first time, and they danced until their shoes were worn to pieces. But the third time he took a cup away with him as a token.

When the hour had come for him to give his answer, he took the three twigs and the cup, and went to the King; but the twelve stood behind the door to hear what he was going to say. When the King asked, —

“Where have my twelve daughters danced their shoes to pieces in the night?” he answered, —

“In a castle under the ground with twelve princes,” and told how it had come to pass, and brought out the tokens. The King then called his daughters, and asked them if the Soldier had told the truth, and they had to say he had told the truth. Then the King asked which of them he would have to wife? He answered, —

“I am no longer young, so give me the eldest.” So they had the wedding on the self-same day, and the kingdom was promised him after the King’s death. But the princes were bewitched for as many days as they had danced nights with the twelve.

THE GOOSE-GIRL.

ONCE upon a time there was an old Queen whose husband had been dead for many years. She had a beautiful daughter, and when this Princess grew up she was betrothed to a prince who lived far away. When the time came for her to be married, and she had to go forth to meet her bridegroom, the Queen sent her off with many costly treasures of silver and gold, and cups and jewels ; in short, everything which a king's daughter should have, for she loved her child with all her heart. She sent, too, her maid, who was to ride with her, and hand her over to the bridegroom. Each had a horse for the journey, but the horse of the King's daughter was called Falada, and could speak.

Now when the hour of parting had come, the aged mother took a small knife and cut her finger with it until it bled ; then she held a white cloth to it into which she let three drops of blood fall, gave it to her daughter, and said, —

“ Dear child, keep this with care, for you may need it on your way.”

So they wept and took leave of each other ; the Princess put the piece of cloth in her bosom,

got up on her horse, and went away to her bridegroom. After she had ridden for a while she felt a burning thirst, and said to her Maid, —

“Get down and take my cup which you have brought with you for me, and get me some water from the stream, for I should like to drink.”

“If you are thirsty,” said the Maid, “get off your horse yourself, and lie down and drink out of the stream; I don’t choose to be your servant.” So in her great thirst the Princess got down, bent over the water in the stream and drank, for she was not allowed to drink out of the golden cup. Then she said, —

“Ah, Heaven!” and the three drops of blood answered, —

“If your mother knew this, her heart would break.” But the King’s daughter was humble, said nothing, and got up on her horse again. She rode some miles farther, but the day was warm; the sun scorched her, and she was thirsty once more; so when they came to a stream of water, she again cried to her Maid, —

“Get down and give me some water in my golden cup,” for she had long ago forgotten the girl’s ill words. But the Maid said still more proudly, —

“If you wish to drink, drink as you can; I don’t choose to be your maid.” Then in her great thirst the King’s daughter got down, bent over the flowing stream, wept, and said,

“Ah, Heaven!” and the drops of blood again replied, —

“If your mother knew this her heart would break.” And as she was thus drinking and leaning right over the stream, the cloth with the three drops of blood fell out of her bosom, and floated away with the water without her seeing it, so great was her trouble. But the Maid had seen it, and she was glad enough, for she knew that when the Princess lost the drops of blood she became weak.

So now when the Princess wanted to get on her horse again, the one that was called Falada, the Maid said, —

“Falada is more proper for me, and my nag will do for you,” and the Princess had to be content with that. Then the Maid, with many hard words, bade the Princess take off her royal clothes and change with her; and at last she made the Princess swear by the clear sky above her that she would not say one word of this to any one at the royal court. But Falada saw all this.

The Maid now got up on Falada, and the true bride got up on the bad horse, and thus they went on till they came to the royal palace. The Prince sprang to meet his bride, and lifted the Maid from her horse, for he thought she must be the bride. The Maid was led upstairs, but the real Princess was left standing below.

The old King looked out of the window and saw her standing in the yard, and how dainty and pretty she was. He went to the royal room and asked the bride about the girl she had with her who was standing down below in the yard, and who she was.

"I picked her up on my way," said she ; "give the girl something to work at, that she may not stand idle." But the old King had no work for her, and knew of none, so he said, —

"I have a little boy who tends the geese, she may help him." The boy was called Conrad, and the true bride had to help him tend the geese. Soon afterward the false bride said to the young King, —

"Dearest husband, I beg you to do me a kindness." He answered, —

"I will do so most gladly."

"Then send and have the head of the horse on which I rode here cut off, for it vexed me on the way." Really she was afraid the horse might tell how she had treated the King's daughter.

The faithful Falada was to die ; this came to the ears of the real Princess, and she went to the man who was to cut off Falada's head, and said she would give him a piece of gold if he would do something for her. There was a great dark-looking gateway in the town, through which morning and evening she had to pass with the

geese : would he be so good as to nail up Falada's head on it, so that she might see him again, more than once. The man promised to do that, and cut off the head, and nailed it fast beneath the dark gateway.

Early in the morning when the real Princess and Conrad drove out their flock beneath this gateway, she said in passing, —

“ Alas, Falada, hanging there ! ”

Then the Head answered, —

“ Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare !
If this your tender mother knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.”

Then they went still farther out of the town, and drove their geese into the country. And when they had come to the meadow, she sat down and unbound her hair. It was like pure gold, and Conrad saw it, and wanted to pluck out a few hairs. Then she said, —

“ Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,
Blow Conrad's little hat away,
And make him chase it here and there,
Till I have braided all my hair,
And bound it up again.”

And there came such a strong wind that it blew Conrad's hat far away across country, and he had to run after it. When he came back she had combed her hair and was putting it up again, and he could not get any of it. Then Conrad was angry, and would not speak to her, and thus

they watched the geese until the evening, and then they went home.

Next day when they were driving the geese out through the dark gateway, the maiden said, —

“Alas, Falada, hanging there !”

Falada answered, —

“Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare !
If this your tender mother knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.”

And she sat down again in the field and began to comb out her hair, and Conrad ran and tried to clutch it, so she said in haste, —

“Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,
Blow Conrad’s little hat away,
And make him chase it here and there,
Till I have braided all my hair,
And bound it up again.”

Then the wind blew, and blew his little hat off his head and far away, and Conrad had to run after it ; and when he came back, her hair had been put up a long time, and he could get none of it, and so they looked after their geese till evening came.

But in the evening after they had got home, Conrad went to the old King, and said, —

“I won’t tend the geese with that girl any longer !”

“Why not ?” asked the aged King.

“Oh, because she vexes me the whole day

long." Then the aged King bade him tell what it was that she did to him. And Conrad said, —

"In the morning when we pass beneath the dark gateway with the flock, there is a sorry horse's head on the wall, and she says to it, —

" ' Alas, Falada, hanging there ! ' "

And the Head replies, —

" ' Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare !
If this your tender mother knew,
Her heart would surely break in two. ' "

And Conrad went on to tell what took place in the goose pasture, and how when there he had to chase his hat.

The aged King told him to drive his flock out again next day, and as soon as morning came he placed himself behind the dark gateway. There he heard how the girl spoke to the head of Falada, and then he too went into the country, and hid himself in the bushes in the meadow. There he soon saw with his own eyes the goose-girl and the goose-boy bringing their flock ; and after a while she sat down and undid her hair, which shone like gold. And soon she said, —

" Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,
Blow Conrad's little hat away,
And make him chase it here and there,
Till I have braided all my hair,
And bound it up again."

Then came a blast of wind and carried off Con-

rad's hat, so that he had to run far away, while the maiden quietly went on combing and plaiting her hair, all of which the King saw.

Then he went away without her seeing him, and when the goose-girl came home in the evening, he called her aside, and asked why she did all these things.

"I may not tell you that, for I have sworn by the clear sky above me not to tell to any one in the court what has been done to me; if I had not done that, I should have lost my life." He urged her and left her no peace, but he could draw nothing from her. Then said he, —

"If you will not tell me anything, tell your trouble to the iron stove there," and he went away. Then she crept into the iron stove, and began to weep and lament; and she emptied her whole heart, and said, —

"Here am I cast off by the whole world, and yet I am a King's daughter, and a false maid has by force brought me to this pass. I have been made to put off my royal clothes, and she has taken my place with my bridegroom, and I have to be a goose-girl. If my mother did but know, her heart would break."

The aged King was standing outside by the pipe, and heard what she said. Then he came back again, and bade her come out of the stove. Now royal clothes were put on her, and how beautiful she was! The aged King called his

son, and told him that he had got the false bride, who was only a maid, but that the true one was standing there, the little goose-girl.

The young King was glad enough when he saw her beauty and youth, and a great feast was made to which all the people and all good friends were bidden. At the head of the table sat the bridegroom with the King's daughter at one side of him, and the Maid on the other, but the Maid did not know the Princess in her bright array.

When they had eaten and drunken, and were merry, the aged King asked the Maid as a riddle, what should be done to a person who had behaved in such and such a way to her master, and then he told the whole story. The false bride said,—

“She should be put in a barrel with pointed nails sticking in it, and two white horses should drag her along through one street after another, till she was dead.”

“It is thou,” said the aged King, “and thou hast spoken thine own sentence, and thus shall it be done unto thee.” And when the sentence had been carried out, the young King married his true bride, and both of them ruled their kingdom in peace and happiness.

FAITHFUL JOHN.

ONCE upon a time an old King lay ill, and thought to himself, —

“I am lying on what must be my death-bed.” Then said he, —

“Tell Faithful John to come to me.” Faithful John was his favorite servant, and was so called because he had for his whole life long been so true to his master. When therefore he came beside the bed, the King said to him, —

“Most faithful John, I feel my end is near, and I have no anxiety except about my son. He is still of tender age, and cannot always know how to guide himself. If you do not promise me to teach him everything that he ought to know, and to be a father to him, I cannot close my eyes in peace.” Then answered Faithful John, —

“I will not forsake him, and will serve him faithfully, even if it should cost me my life.” On this, the old King said, —

“Now I die in comfort and peace.” Then he added, “After my death, you are to show him the whole castle: all the chambers, halls, and vaults, and all the treasures which lie therein ;

but the last chamber in the long gallery, in which is the picture of the Princess of the Golden Dwelling, that you must not show. If he sees that picture, he will fall violently in love with her, and will drop down in a swoon, and go through great danger for her sake ; so you must keep him from that."

When Faithful John had once more given his promise to the old King about this, the King said no more, but laid his head on his pillow, and died.

Now when the old King had been carried to his grave, Faithful John told the young King all that he had promised his father on his death-bed, and said, —

"This will I surely perform, and will be faithful to thee as I have been faithful to him, even if it should cost me my life." When the mourning was over, Faithful John said to him, —

"It is now time that you should see your riches. I will show you your father's palace." Then he took him everywhere, up and down, and let him see all the riches and the splendid rooms, only there was one room which he did not open, that in which the dangerous picture hung. The picture was, however, so placed that when the door was opened you looked right at it, and it was so finely painted that it seemed to breathe and live ; there was nothing more charming or more beautiful in the whole world.

The young King saw that Faithful John always walked past this one door, and he said, —

“Why do you never open this one for me?”

“There is something therein,” he replied, “which would scare you.” But the King answered, —

“I have seen all the palace, and I will know what is in this room also,” and he went and tried to break open the door by force. Then Faithful John held him back and said, —

“I promised your father before his death that you should not see what is in this chamber; it might bring the greatest trouble on you and on me.”

“Ah, no,” replied the young King, “if I do not go in, it will be the death of me. I shall have no rest day or night until I have seen it with my own eyes. I shall not leave the place now till you have unlocked the door.”

Then Faithful John saw that there was no help for it, and with a heavy heart and many sighs he took the key from the great bunch. When he had opened the door, he went in first, and stood before the King so as to hide the portrait, but what good did that do? The King stood on tiptoe and saw it over Faithful John’s shoulder. And when he saw the portrait of the maiden, which was so splendid and shone with gold and precious stones, he fell fainting on the ground.

Faithful John took him up, carried him to his bed, and thought sadly, —

“The trouble has come upon us; what will be the end of it?” Then he poured wine down the King’s throat, until he came to himself again. The first words the King said were, —

“Ah, the beautiful face! whose is it?”

“That is the Princess of the Golden Dwelling,” answered Faithful John. Then the King continued, —

“My love for her is so great, that if all the leaves on all the trees were tongues, they could not declare it. I will give my life to win her. You are my most faithful John; you must help me.”

The faithful servant took a long time to think about the matter, for it was hard even to get sight of the King’s daughter. At last he thought of a way, and said to the King, —

“Everything which she has about her is of gold, — tables, chairs, dishes, glasses, and bowls. Among your treasures are five tons of gold; let a goldsmith work these up into all manner of things, into all kinds of birds, wild beasts, and strange animals, such as may please her, and we will go there with them and try our luck.”

The King sent for all the goldsmiths, and they had to work night and day, until at last the most splendid things were ready. When everything was stowed on board a ship, Faithful John

put on the dress of a merchant, and the King had to do the same that no one might know him. Then they sailed across the sea, and sailed on and on until they came to the town where dwelt the Princess of the Golden Dwelling.

Faithful John bade the King stay behind on the ship, and wait for him.

“Perhaps I shall bring the Princess with me,” said he, “so see you that everything is in order; have the golden vessels set out and the whole ship put in fine array.” Then Faithful John filled his apron with all kinds of gold things, went on shore, and walked straight to the royal palace.

When he entered the yard of the palace, a beautiful girl was standing by the well with two golden pails in her hand, drawing water with them. And when she was just turning round to carry away the sparkling water she saw the stranger, and asked who he was. So he answered, —

“I am a merchant,” and opened his apron, and let her look in. Then she cried, —

“Oh, what beautiful gold things!” and put her pails down and looked at the golden wares one after the other. Then said the girl, —

“The Princess must see these; she thinks so much of golden things, she will buy all you have.” She took him by the hand and led him upstairs, for she was the waiting-maid. When

the King's daughter saw the wares, she was quite delighted and said, —

“They are so well made, I will buy them all of you.” But Faithful John said, —

“I am only the servant of a rich merchant. The things I have here are not to be compared with those my master has in his ship. They are the most beautiful and costly things that have ever been made in gold.” The Princess wanted to have everything brought to her there, but he said, —

“There are so many of them that it would take a great many days to do that, and so many rooms would be needed to show them off in, that your house is not big enough.” This worked her up to such a pitch that at last she said, —

“Show me the way to the ship; I will go there myself, and see your master's treasures.”

At this Faithful John was highly pleased, and led her to the ship; and when the King saw her, her beauty was even greater than the picture had shown it to be, and he thought his heart would burst in two.

Then the Princess got into the ship, and the King led her into the cabin. Faithful John, however, remained with the pilot, and bade him push the ship off, saying, —

“Set all sail, till it fly like a bird in air.” Within, the King was showing her the golden things, every one of them, also the wild beasts

and strange animals. Many hours went by as she looked and looked, and in her delight she did not see that the ship was sailing away.

After she had looked at the last, she thanked the merchant and wanted to go home, but when she came to the side of the ship, she saw that it was on the deep sea far from land, and hurrying onward with all sail set.

“Ah,” cried she in her alarm, “I am betrayed! I am carried away and have fallen into the power of a merchant. I would die rather!” But the King seized her hand, and said, —

“I am not a merchant. I am a King, and as well born as you; and if I have carried you away by a trick, that is because of my great love for you. The first time I looked on your picture, I fell fainting to the ground.”

When the Princess of the Golden Dwelling heard that, she was more at ease, and her heart turned unto him, so that she was ready to be his wife.

It happened, while they were sailing over the deep sea, that Faithful John, who was sitting in the fore part of the vessel, making music, saw three Ravens in the air, flying toward them. On this he stopped playing and listened to what they were saying to each other, for he could understand them. One cried, —

“Oh, there he is carrying home the Princess of the Golden Dwelling.”

"Yes," replied the second, "but he has not got her yet." Said the third, —

"But he has got her, she is sitting beside him in the ship." Then the first began again, and cried, —

"What good will that do him? When they reach land a Chestnut Horse will leap forward to meet him, and the Prince will want to mount it, but if he does that, it will run away with him, and rise up into the air with him, and he will never see his maiden more." Then the second asked, —

"But is there no escape?"

"Oh, yes, if any one else gets on it swiftly, and takes out the pistol which must be in the saddle, and shoots the horse dead with it, the young King is saved. But who knows that? And whoever does know it, and tells it to him, will be turned to stone from the toe to the knee." Then said the second, —

"I know more than that; even if the horse be killed, the young King will still not keep his bride. When they go into the castle together, a wedding garment will be lying there, and looking as if it were woven of gold and silver; it is, however, nothing but sulphur and pitch, and if he put it on, it will burn him to the very bone and marrow."

"Is there no escape at all?" asked the third.

"Oh, yes," replied the second, "if any one

with gloves on seizes the garment and throws it into the fire and burns it, the young King will be saved. But what of that? Whoever knows it and tells it to him, half his body will become stone from the knee to the heart."

Then said the third, "I know still more; even if the wedding garment be burnt, the young King still will not have his bride. After the wedding, when the dancing begins and the young Queen is dancing, she will suddenly turn pale and fall down as if dead, and if some one does not lift her up and draw three drops of blood from her side and spit them out again, she will die. But if any one who knows that were to declare it, he would become stone from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot."

When the Ravens had spoken of this together, they flew on, and Faithful John had well understood everything, but from that time forth he became quiet and sad; for if he hid what he had heard from his master, the King would suffer all these things, and if he told it to him, he himself must lose his life. At last, he said to himself, —

"I will save my master, even if it cost me my life."

When they came to shore, all happened as had been foretold by the Ravens, and a splendid Chestnut Horse sprang forward.

"Good," said the King, "he shall carry me

to my palace," and was about to mount it when Faithful John got before him, jumped quickly on it, drew the pistol and shot the horse. Then the other servants of the King, who were not very fond of Faithful John, cried, —

"How shameful to kill the beautiful animal that was to have carried the King to his palace!" But the King said, —

"Hold your peace and leave him alone; he is my most faithful John, who knows what is the good of that!"

They went into the palace, and in the hall lay the wedding garment looking as if it were made of gold and silver. The young King went toward it and was about to take hold of it, but Faithful John pushed him away, seized it with gloves on, carried it quickly to the fire, and burnt it. The others again began to murmur, and said, —

"Look, now he is even burning the King's wedding garment!" But the young King said, —

"Who knows what good he may have done; leave him alone; he is my most faithful John."

And now the wedding took place: the dance began, and the bride also took part in it; then Faithful John was watchful and looked into her face, and suddenly she turned pale and fell down as if she were dead. On this he ran hastily to her, lifted her up, and bore her into a chamber; then he laid her down, and knelt and

sucked the three drops of blood from her side, and spat them out. At once she was herself again, not knowing what had been done; but the young King had seen this, and was very angry with Faithful John, and cried, "Throw him into prison!" Next morning Faithful John was led to the gallows, and when he stood on high he said, —

"Every one who has to die is permitted to make one last speech; may I too claim the right?"

"Yes," answered the King, "it shall be granted unto thee." Then said Faithful John, —

"I have always been true to thee," and told how he had heard the talk of the Ravens when on the sea, and how he had to do all these things to save his master. Then cried the King, —

"O my most faithful John. Pardon, pardon — bring him down." But as Faithful John spoke the last word he had fallen down lifeless and become a stone.

At this the King and the Queen suffered greatly, and the King said, —

"Ah, how ill I have repaid great fidelity!" and ordered the stone figure to be taken up and placed in his bedroom beside his bed. And as often as he looked on it he wept and said, —

"Ah, if I could bring thee to life again, my most faithful John." Some time passed and the

Queen bore twins, two sons who grew fast and were her delight. Once when the Queen was at church and the two children were sitting playing beside their father, the King full of grief again looked at the stone figure, and sighed and said, —

“Ah, if I could but bring you to life again, my most faithful John.” Then the Stone began to speak and said, —

“You can bring me to life again if you will use for that purpose what is dearest to you.” Then the King cried, —

“I will give everything I have in the world for you.” The Stone went on, —

“If you will cut off the heads of your two children with your own hand, and sprinkle me with their blood, I shall be restored to life.”

The King nearly died when he heard that he himself must kill his dearest children, but he thought of Faithful John’s great faithfulness, and how he had died for him; so he drew his sword, and with his own hand cut off the children’s heads. And when he had sprinkled the Stone with their blood, life came back to it, and Faithful John stood once more safe and sound before him. He said to the King, —

“Your faithfulness shall be rewarded,” and took the heads of the children, put them on again, and rubbed the wounds with their blood, on which they at once became whole again, and

jumped about, and went on playing as if nothing had happened.

Then the King was full of joy, and when he saw the Queen coming he hid Faithful John and the two children in a great cupboard. When she entered, he said to her, —

“Have you been praying in the church?”

“Yes,” she answered, “but I could think of nothing but Faithful John and what has befallen him through us.” Then said he, —

“Dear wife, we can give him his life again, but it will cost us our two little sons.” The Queen turned pale, and her heart was full of terror, but she said, —

“We owe it to him for his great faithfulness.”

Then the King was rejoiced that she thought as he had thought, and went and opened the cupboard, and brought forth Faithful John and the children, and said, —

“God be praised, he is delivered, and we have our little sons again also,” and told her all that had taken place. Then they all dwelt together in great joy until their death.

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JORINDA AND JORINGEL.

THERE was once an old castle in the middle of a deep wood, and in it an old woman who was a witch lived all by herself. In the day-time she was changed into a cat or a screech-owl, but in the evening she took her proper shape again as a human being. She could lure wild beasts and birds to her, and then she killed and boiled and roasted them.

If any one came within one hundred steps of the castle he must needs stand still, and then he could not stir from the place until she bade him be free. But whenever a young maid came within this circle, she changed her into a bird, and shut her up in a wicker-work cage, and carried the cage into a room in the castle. She had about seven thousand cages of rare birds in the castle.

Now there was once a maiden who was called Jorinda, who was fairer than all other girls. She and a handsome youth named Joringel had promised to marry each other, and their greatest happiness was in being together. One day in order that they might be able to talk together in quiet they went for a walk in the forest.

“Take care,” said Joringel, “that you do not go too near the castle.” It was at the end of a beautiful day; the sun shot its beams between the trunks of the trees, and the turtle-doves sang mournfully upon the young boughs of the birch-trees.

Jorinda wept now and then: she did not know why; the sun was low in the west, and a sadness came over her. Joringel was sorrowful too; they were as sad as if they were about to die. Then they looked around them, and were quite at a loss, for they did not know by which way they should go home. The sun was still half above the mountain, but the other half was set.

Joringel looked through the bushes, and saw they were close by the old castle. He was filled with deadly fear. Jorinda was singing, —

“My little bird, with the necklace red,
Sings sorrow, sorrow, sorrow,
He sings that the dove must soon be dead,
Sings sorrow, sor — Jug, jug, jug.”

Joringel looked for Jorinda. She was changed into a nightingale, and sang “jug, jug, jug.” A screech-owl with glowing eyes flew three times round about her, and three times cried “to-whoo, to-whoo, to-whoo!”

Joringel could not move: he stood there like a stone, and could neither weep nor speak, nor move hand or foot.

The sun had now set. The owl flew into the thicket, and at once there came out of it a crooked old woman, yellow and lean, with large red eyes and a hooked nose, the point of which reached to her chin. She muttered to herself, caught the nightingale, and took it away in her hand.

Joringel could neither speak nor move from the spot; the nightingale was gone. At last the woman came back, and said in a hollow voice,—

“Greet thee, Zachiel. If the moon shines on the cage, Zachiel, let him loose at once.” Then Joringel was freed. He fell on his knees before the woman and begged that she would give him back his Jorinda, but she said that he should never have her again, and went away. He called, he wept, but all in vain.

“Ah, what is to become of me?”

Joringel went away, and at last came to a strange village; there he kept sheep for a long time. He often walked round and round the castle, but not too near it. At last he dreamt one night that he found a blood-red flower, and in the middle of it was a beautiful large pearl; he dreamt again that he picked the flower and went with it to the castle, and that everything he touched with the flower was freed from enchantment; he also dreamt that by means of it he set his Jorinda free.

In the morning, when he awoke, he began to

seek over hill and dale for the flower he had seen in his dream. Seven days he sought for it, and then, early in the morning, he found the blood-red flower. In the middle of it there was a large dewdrop, as big as the finest pearl.

Day and night he went on his way with this flower to the castle. When he was within a hundred steps of it he was not held fast, but walked on to the door. Joringel was full of joy ; he touched the door with the flower ; it sprang open. He walked in through the courtyard, and listened for the sound of the birds. At last he heard it. He went on, and found the room from whence it came, and there the witch was feeding the birds in the seven thousand cages.

When she saw Joringel she was angry, very angry, and scolded, but she could not come within two steps of him. He did not take any notice of her, but went and looked at the cages with the birds ; but there were many hundred nightingales ; how was he to find his Jorinda again ?

Just then he saw the old woman quietly take away a cage with a bird in it, and go toward the door.

Swiftly he sprang toward her, touched the cage with the flower, and also the old woman. She could now no longer bewitch any one ; and Jorinda was standing there, clasping him round the neck, and she was as beautiful as ever !

THE WHITE SNAKE.

A LONG time ago there lived a famous King who was very wise. Nothing was hidden from him, and it seemed as if news of the most secret things flew to him through the air. But he had a strange custom ; every day after dinner, when the table was cleared, and no one else was present, a trusty servant had to bring him one more dish. It was covered, and even the servant did not know what was in it, neither did any one know, for the King never took off the cover to eat of it until he was quite alone.

This had gone on for a long time, when one day the servant, who took away the dish, was so very curious that he could not help carrying the dish into his own room. When he had locked the door, he lifted the cover off the dish, and saw a White Snake lying there. And when he saw it he wanted to taste it, so he cut off a little bit and put it into his mouth.

No sooner had it touched his tongue than he heard a strange whispering of little voices outside his window. He went and listened, and saw that it was the Sparrows who were chattering together, and telling one another of all kinds of things

which they had seen in the fields and woods. Now all this came of eating the White Snake.

It so happened that on this very day the Queen lost her best ring, and the King thought this trusty servant must have stolen it, for he went everywhere. So he ordered the man to be brought before him, and told him with angry words that unless he could point out the thief he should be looked upon as guilty and put to death. In vain the man said he had not taken the ring; he was sent away with no better answer.

In his trouble and fear he went down into the yard and began to think. Now some Ducks were sitting by a brook and taking their rest; and while they were making their feathers smooth with their bills they were having a little talk. The servant stood by and listened. They were telling one another of all the places where they had been waddling about all the morning, and what good food they had found; and one said in a pitiful tone, —

“Something lies heavy on my stomach; as I was eating in haste I swallowed a ring which lay under the Queen’s window.” The servant at once seized the Duck by the neck, carried her to the kitchen, and said to the Cook, —

“Here is a fine Duck; pray kill her.”

“Yes,” said the Cook, and weighed her in his hand; “she has made herself pretty fat, and has

been waiting long enough to be roasted.” So the Cook cut off her head, and as the Duck was being made ready for the table, the Queen’s ring was found inside her.

The servant could now easily prove that he did not take the ring ; and the King, to make up for the wrong, told him he might have the best place in the court that he could wish for. The servant did not want a place, and only asked for a horse and some money, as he had a mind to see the world and go about a little.

The King gave him what he asked and he set out on his way. One day he came to a pond, where he saw three Fishes caught in the reeds and gasping for water. Now, though it is said that fishes are dumb, he could hear them crying out that they must die, and, as he had a kind heart, he got off his horse and put the three back into the water. They trembled with delight, put out their heads, and cried to him, —

“ We will remember you and repay you for saving us ! ”

He rode on, and after a while it seemed to him that he heard a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened, and heard an Ant-King complain, —

“ Why cannot folks, with their clumsy beasts, keep off our bodies ? That stupid horse, with his heavy hoofs, has been treading down my people without mercy ! ” So the man turned down a side path and the Ant-King cried out to

him, "We will remember you — one good turn deserves another!"

The path led him into a wood, and there he saw two old Ravens standing by their nest, and throwing out their young ones.

"Out with you, you idle, good-for-nothing things!" cried they; "we cannot find food for you any longer; you are big enough, and can provide for yourselves." But the poor young Ravens lay upon the ground flapping their wings and crying, —

"Oh, what helpless chicks we are! We must shift for ourselves, and yet we cannot fly! What can we do, but lie here and starve?" So the good young fellow got down and killed his horse with his sword, and gave it to them for food. Then they came hopping up to it, ate all they wanted, and cried, —

"We will remember you — one good turn deserves another!"

And now he had to use his own legs, and when he had walked a long way, he came to a large city. There was a great noise and a crowd in the streets, and a man rode up on horseback, crying aloud, —

"The King's daughter wants a husband; but whoever asks for her hand must do a hard task, and if he does not succeed he must lose his life." Many had already made the trial, but in vain; still, when the youth saw the King's

daughter, he was so taken with her great beauty that he forgot all danger, went before the King, and asked for her hand.

He was led out to the sea, and a gold ring was thrown into it, in his sight ; then the King ordered him to fetch this ring up from the bottom of the sea, and added, —

“ If you come up again without it you will be thrown in again and again until you die amid the waves.” All the people were sorry for the handsome youth ; then they went away, leaving him alone by the sea.

He stood on the shore and thought what he should do, when all at once he saw three Fishes come swimming toward him ; they were the very Fishes whose lives he had saved. The one in the middle held a clam-shell in its mouth ; it laid it on the shore at the youth's feet, and when he had taken it up and opened it, there lay the gold ring in the shell. Full of joy he took it to the King, and asked that he would grant him the reward.

But when the proud princess saw that he was not her equal in birth, she scorned him, and bade him first do another task. She went down into the garden and with her own hands poured out ten sacks full of seed on the grass ; then she said, —

“ To-morrow morning before sunrise these must be picked up, and not a single grain be wanting.”

The youth sat down in the garden and thought what he could do, but he could think of nothing, and there he sat in grief till the break of day, when he knew he should be led to death. But as soon as the first rays of the sun shone into the garden he saw all the ten sacks standing side by side, quite full; not a single grain was missing. The Ant-King had come in the night with thousands and thousands of Ants, and the grateful little things had picked up all the seed, and put them into the sacks.

When the King's daughter came down into the garden, she was amazed to see that the young man had done the task she had given him. But she could not yet put down her proud heart, and said, —

“He has done both the tasks, but he shall not be my husband until he has brought me an apple from the Tree of Life.”

The youth did not know where the Tree of Life stood, but he set out, and would have gone on forever, as long as his legs would carry him, though he had no hope of finding it. He had wandered through three kingdoms, when he came one evening to a wood, and lay down under a tree to sleep. He heard a rustling in the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand. At the same time three Ravens flew down to him, perched upon his knee, and said, —

“We are the three young Ravens whom you

saved from starving ; when we had grown big, and heard you were seeking the Golden Apple, we flew over the sea to the end of the world, where the Tree of Life stands, and have brought you the apple."

The youth, full of joy, set out for home and took the Golden Apple to the King's beautiful daughter, who had now no more excuses left to make. They cut the Apple of Life in two and ate it together ; and then her heart became full of love for him, and they lived happily ever after.

STRONG HANS.

THERE were once a man and a woman who had an only child, and they lived by themselves alone in a lonely hut. It came to pass that the mother once went into the wood to gather branches of fir, and took with her little Hans, who was just two years old. It was in spring, and the child was happy with the flowers, so she went still farther with him into the wood. All at once two robbers sprang out, seized the mother and child, and carried them far away into the black forest, where no one ever came from one year's end to another.

The poor woman begged the robbers to set her and her child free, but their hearts were made of stone; they would not listen to her, and drove her on. After they had worked their way through bushes and briars for about two miles, they came to a rock where there was a door; the robbers knocked at it and it opened at once.

They went through a long dark passage, and at last came into a great cave, which was lighted by a fire that burnt on the hearth. On the wall hung swords and guns, which shone in

the light ; and there was a black table at which four other robbers were sitting, and the captain sat at the head of it.

As soon as he saw the woman he came and spoke to her, and told her to be at ease and have no fear ; they would do nothing to hurt her, but she must look after the housekeeping ; if she kept things in order, she should not fare ill. Then they gave her something to eat, and showed her a bed where she might sleep with her child.

The woman stayed many years with the robbers, and Hans grew tall and strong. His mother told him stories, and taught him to read an old book of tales about knights which she found in the cave. When Hans was nine years old, he made himself a strong club out of a fir-tree, hid it behind the bed, and then went to his mother, and said, —

“ Dear mother, pray tell me who is my father ; I must and will know.” His mother was silent and would not tell him, for fear he should become homesick ; besides she knew that the robbers would not let him go away ; but it almost broke her heart that Hans should not go to his father. In the night, when the robbers came home from stealing, Hans brought out his club, stood before the captain, and said, —

“ I now wish to know who is my father, and if you do not at once tell me I will knock you

down." Then the captain laughed, and gave Hans such a box on the ear that he rolled under the table. Hans got up again, held his tongue, and thought, —

"I will wait another year and then try again, perhaps I shall do better then." When the year was over, he brought out his club again, rubbed the dust off it, looked at it well, and said, —

"It is a stout strong club." At night the robbers came home, drank one jug of wine after another, and their heads began to be heavy. Then Hans brought out his club, stood before the captain, and asked him who was his father? But the captain again gave him such a box on the ear that Hans rolled under the table; but it was not long before he was up again, and beat the captain and robbers so with his club that they could no longer move either their arms or their legs. His mother stood in a corner proud of his bravery and strength. When Hans had done his work, he went to his mother, and said, —

"Now I have shown myself to be in earnest, but I must also know who is my father."

"Dear Hans," said the mother, "come, we will go and seek him until we find him." She took the door-key from the captain, and Hans fetched a great meal-sack and packed into it gold and silver, until it was full, and then he took it on his back.

They left the cave, but how Hans did open his eyes when he came out of the darkness into daylight, and saw the green trees, and the flowers, and the birds, and the morning sun in the sky. He stood there and stared at everything just as if he had not been very wise. His mother kept her eyes open to find the way home, and when they had walked for two hours, they came to their little house.

The father was sitting in the doorway. He wept for joy when he saw his wife and heard that Hans was his son, for he had long thought them both dead. But Hans, although he was not twelve years old, was a head taller than his father. They went into the little room together, but Hans had scarcely put his sack on the bench by the stove when the whole house began to crack; the bench broke down and then the floor, and the heavy sack fell through into the cellar.

"God save us!" cried the father, "what's that? Now you have broken our little house to pieces!"

"Don't grow any gray hairs about that, dear father," said Hans; "there, in that sack, is more than is wanted for a new house."

The father and Hans at once began to build a new house; to buy cattle and land, and to keep a farm. Hans ploughed the fields, and when he walked after the plough and pushed it

into the ground, he was so strong the bullocks had scarcely any need to draw. The next spring, Hans said, —

“Keep all the money ; only let me have a walking-stick that weighs a hundred pounds, and I will set out on my travels.” When the stick was ready, he left his father’s house, went forth, and came to a deep, dark wood. There he heard something crunching and cracking ; he looked round, and saw a fir-tree which was wound like a rope from the bottom to the top, and when he looked up he saw a great fellow who had laid hold of the tree and was twisting it like a willow wand.

“Hollo !” cried Hans ; “what are you doing up there ?” The fellow replied, —

“I got some fagots together yesterday and am twisting a rope for them.”

“That is what I like,” thought Hans, “he has some strength ;” and he called to him, “Leave that alone, and come with me.” The fellow came down, and he was taller by a whole head than Hans, and Hans was not little. “Your name is now Fir-twister,” said Hans to him.

Then they went farther, and heard something knocking and hammering so hard that the ground shook at every stroke. Soon they came to a mighty rock ; a giant was standing before and striking great pieces of it away with his

fist. When Hans asked what he was about, he answered, —

“At night, when I want to sleep, bears, wolves, and other little things of that kind come, which sniff and snuffle about me, and won’t let me rest; so I want to build myself a house and lay myself inside it, that I may have some peace.”

“Oh, indeed,” thought Hans, “I can make use of this one also;” and said to him, “Leave your house-building alone, and come with me; you shall be called Rock-splitter.” The man was willing, and they all three roamed through the wood; wherever they went the wild beasts were scared, and ran away from them.

In the evening they came to an old empty castle, went up into it, and lay down in the hall to sleep. The next morning Hans went into the garden. It had run quite wild, and was full of thorns and bushes. As he was thus walking round about, a wild boar rushed at him; but he gave it such a blow with his club that it fell dead.

He took it on his back and carried it in, and they put it on a spit, roasted it, and had a good time with it. Then they planned that each day, in turn, two should go out hunting, and one should stay at home, and cook nine pounds of meat for each of them.

Fir-twister stayed at home the first day, and

Hans and Rock-splitter went out hunting. When Fir-twister was busy cooking, a little dried-up old man came to him in the castle, and asked for some meat.

"Be off," he said, "you need no meat." But how amazed Fir-twister was when the Dwarf sprang up at him, and beat him so with his fists that he could not defend himself, but fell on the ground and gasped for breath! The Dwarf did not go away until he had beat him well.

When the two others came home from hunting, Fir-twister said nothing to them of the little old man and of the blows he had given him, and thought, —

"When they stay at home, they may just try their chance with the little fellow;" and the mere thought of that healed his bruises.

The next day Rock-splitter stayed at home, and he fared just as Fir-twister had done; he was very ill treated by the Dwarf because he was not willing to give him any meat. When the others came home in the evening, Fir-twister easily saw what Rock-splitter had suffered, but both kept still, and thought, —

"Hans must also taste some of that soup."

Hans, who had to stay at home the next day, did his work in the kitchen as it had to be done; as he stood skimming the pan, the Dwarf came, and without more ado called for a bit of meat. Then Hans thought, —

“He is a poor wretch, I will give him some of my share, that the others may not run short,” and handed him a bit. When the Dwarf had eaten it, he again asked for some meat, and Hans gave it to him ; then he told him it was a good-sized piece, and that he was to be content with it. But the Dwarf begged again for the third time.

“You have no manners !” said Hans, and gave him none. Then the Dwarf wanted to spring on him and treat him as he had treated Fir-twister and Rock-splitter, but he had fallen on the wrong man. Hans just stretched out his arm and gave him a couple of blows which made him jump down the castle steps. Hans was about to run after him, but fell right over him, he was so tall. When he rose up, the Dwarf had got the start of him.

Hans hurried after him as far as the wood, and saw him slip into a hole in the rock. Hans now went home, but he had marked the spot. When the two others came back, they were amazed that Hans was so well. He told them what had taken place, and then they no longer made a secret of how it had fared with them. Hans laughed and said, —

“It served you quite right ; why were you so greedy with your meat ? It is a shame that you who are so big should have let yourselves be beaten by the Dwarf.” At that they took a

basket and a rope, and all three went to the hole in the rock into which the Dwarf had slipped, and let Hans and his club down in the basket.

When Hans had got to the bottom, he found a door, and when he opened it, a maiden was sitting there who was as lovely as any picture ; nay, she was so fair that no words can tell it, and by her side sat the Dwarf and grinned at Hans like a sea-cat ! She was bound with chains, and looked so sadly at him that Hans felt great pity for her, and thought to himself, —

“ You must set her free from the power of the wicked Dwarf,” and gave him such a blow with his club that he fell down dead. Then the chains fell from the maiden, and Hans was charmed with her beauty. She told him she was a King’s daughter ; that a savage count had stolen her away from her home, and shut her up there among the rocks, because she would have nothing to say to him. The count had set the Dwarf to keep watch, and he had made her unhappy enough.

And now Hans placed the maiden in the basket and had her drawn up ; the basket came down again, but Hans did not trust his two men, and thought, —

“ They have already shown themselves to be false, and told me nothing about the Dwarf ; ho knows what plan they may have against

me?" So he put his club in the basket, and it was lucky he did; for when the basket was half-way up, they let it fall again, and if Hans had really been in it he would have been killed. Now he did not know how he was to work his way out of the hole.

"It is indeed sad," said he to himself, "that I have to waste away down here," and as he was thus walking back and forth, he once more came to the little room where the maiden had been sitting, and saw that the Dwarf had a ring on his finger which shone and sparkled. Then he drew it off and put it on, and when he turned it round on his finger, he heard something rustle over his head. He looked up and saw spirits of the air floating above; they told him he was their master, and asked what they should do.

Hans was at first struck dumb, then he said they were to carry him above again. They did this at once, and it was just as if he had flown up himself. When he was once more above ground, he found no one in sight. Fir-twister and Rock-splitter had hurried away, and had taken the maiden with them. But Hans turned the ring, and the spirits of the air came and told him that the two were on the sea.

Hans ran and ran without stopping, until he came to the seashore, and there far, far out on the water he saw a little boat in which his faithless comrades were sitting; he was very angry

and leapt, without thinking what he was doing, club in hand, into the water, and began to swim ; but the club, which weighed a hundred pounds, dragged him deep down until he was all but drowned.

Then in the very nick of time he turned his ring, and at once the spirits of the air came and bore him as swift as lightning into the boat. He swung his club and gave his wicked comrades the blows they had earned, and threw them into the water ; then he sailed away with the beautiful maiden, who had been in the greatest alarm ; he carried her home to her father and mother, and married her, and all lived happily ever after.

THE GIANT AND THE TAILOR.

A CERTAIN Tailor, who was great at boasting but ill at doing, took it into his head to leave his home for a while, and look about the world. As soon as he could do so he went away from his shop, and rambled on his way, over hill and dale, sometimes hither, sometimes thither, but ever on and on. At last he saw afar off in the blue distance a steep hill, and behind the hill a tower reaching to the clouds, which rose up out of a wild dark wood.

"Thunder and lightning," cried the Tailor; "what is that?" and as he was very curious, he went boldly toward it. But what made the Tailor open his eyes and mouth when he came near it, was to see that the tower had legs, and leapt in one bound over the steep hill; it proved to be a great Giant that now stood before him.

"What do you want here, you tiny fly's leg?" cried the Giant, with a voice that sounded like thunder. The Tailor whined, —

"I want just to look about and see if I can earn a bit of bread for myself."

"If that is what you are after," said the Giant, "you may have a place with me."

“If it must be, why not? What wages shall I get?”

“You shall hear what wages you shall have. Every year three hundred and sixty-five days, and when it is leap-year, one more into the bargain. Does that suit you?”

“All right,” replied the Tailor, and thought to himself, “a man must cut his coat according to his cloth; I will try to get away as fast as I can.” On this the Giant said to him, —

“Go, little beggar, and fetch me a jug of water.”

“Had I not better bring the well itself at once, and the spring too?” asked the boaster, and went with the pitcher to the water.

“What! the well and the spring too!” growled the Giant in his beard, for he was rather dull and stupid, and began to be afraid. “That knave is not a fool, he is a wizard. Be on thy guard, old Hans; this is no servingman for thee.” When the Tailor had brought the water, the Giant bade him go into the forest, and cut a couple of logs of wood and bring them back.

“Why not the whole forest, at once, with one stroke? — the whole forest, young and old, with all that is there, both rough and smooth?” asked the little Tailor, and went to cut the wood.

“What! the whole forest, young and old, with all that is there, both rough and smooth, and the well and its spring too,” growled the

stupid Giant in his beard, and was still more scared. "The knave can do much more than bake apples, and is a wizard. Be on thy guard, old Hans; this is no servingman for thee!" When the Tailor had brought the wood, the Giant bade him shoot two or three wild boars for supper.

"Why not rather a thousand at one shot, and bring them all here?" asked the bragging Tailor.

"What!" cried the timid Giant in great terror; "let well alone to-night, and lie down to rest."

The Giant was so scared he could not close an eye all night long; he kept thinking what was the best way to get rid of this dread wizard of a servant. Time brings wisdom. Next morning the Giant and the Tailor went to a marsh, round which stood a number of willow-trees. Then said the Giant, —

"Hark you, Tailor, seat yourself on one of the willow-branches; I long of all things to see if you are big enough to bend it down." So the Tailor sat on it, holding his breath, and making himself heavy so that the bough bent down. As luck would have it, he had not brought his goose with him. He could not hold his breath forever, and when he let his breath out he flew so high into the air that he never was seen again, and the Giant went off light at heart. If the Tailor has not fallen down again, he must be up there in the air.

LITTLE SNOW-WHITE.

ONCE upon a time it was the middle of winter ; the flakes of snow were falling like feathers from the sky ; a Queen sat at a window sewing, and the frame of the window was made of black ebony. As she was sewing and looking out of the window at the snow, she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell upon the snow. And the red looked pretty upon the white snow, and she thought to herself, —

“ Would that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window-frame.” Soon after that she had a little daughter, who was as white as snow, and as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony ; so she was called Little Snow-white. And when the child was born, the Queen died.

A year after, the King took to himself another wife. She was beautiful, but proud, and she could not bear to have any one else more beautiful. She had a wonderful Looking-glass, and when she stood in front of it and looked at herself in it, and said, —

“Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all?”

the Looking-glass answered, —

“Thou, O Queen, art the fairest of all!”

At that she was well pleased, for she knew the Looking-glass spoke the truth.

Now Snow-white grew up, and became more and more beautiful; and when she was seven years old she was as beautiful as the day, and more beautiful than the Queen herself. And once when the Queen asked her Looking-glass, —

“Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all?”

it answered, —

“Thou art fairer than all who are here, Lady Queen.
But more beautiful by far is Snow-white, I ween.”

Then the Queen was mad, and turned green with envy. From that hour, whenever she looked at Snow-white, her breath came and went, she hated the girl so much.

And envy grew higher and higher in her heart like a weed, so that she had no peace day or night. She called a Huntsman, and said, —

“Take the child away into the wood; I will no longer have her in my sight. Kill her, and bring me back her heart as a token.” The Huntsman did as he was told, and took her away; but when he had drawn his knife, and was about to pierce Snow-white’s little heart, she began to weep, and said, —

“Ah, dear Huntsman, leave me my life! I will run away into the wild wood, and never come home again.”

And as she was so beautiful the Huntsman had pity on her and said, —

“Run away, then, you poor child.” “The wild beasts will soon kill you,” thought he; and yet it seemed as if a stone had been rolled from his heart since it was no longer needful for him to kill her. As a young boar just then came running by he stabbed it, and cut out its heart and took it to the Queen as a proof that the child was dead. The cook had to salt this, and the wicked Queen ate it, and thought she had eaten the heart of Snow-white.

But now the poor child was all alone in the great wood, and so afraid that she started at every bush, and did not know what to do. Then she began to run, and ran over sharp stones and through thorns, and the wild beasts ran past her, but did her no harm.

She ran as long as her feet would go until it was almost evening; then she saw a little cottage, and went into it to rest herself. Everything in the cottage was small, but neater and cleaner than can be told. There was a table on which was a white cover, and seven little plates, and by each plate was a little spoon; there were seven little knives and forks, and seven little mugs. Against the wall stood seven little beds side by side, covered with snow-white spreads.

Little Snow-white was so hungry and thirsty that she ate some fruit and bread from each plate, and drank a drop of milk out of each mug, for she did not wish to take all from one only. Then, as she was so tired, she lay down on one of the little beds, but none of them suited her; one was too long, another too short; but at last she found the seventh one was just right, and so she stayed in it, said her prayers, and went to sleep.

When it was quite dark the owners of the cottage came back; they were seven dwarfs who dug in the hills for gold. They lit their seven candles, and as it was now light within the cottage they could see that some one had been there, for everything was not in the same order in which they had left it.

The first said, "Who has been sitting on my chair?"

The second, "Who has been eating off my plate?"

The third, "Who has been taking some of my bread?"

The fourth, "Who has been eating my fruit?"

The fifth, "Who has been using my fork?"

The sixth, "Who has been cutting with my knife?"

The seventh, "Who has been drinking out of my mug?"

Then the first looked round and saw that there was a little hole in his bed, and he said, —

“Who has been getting into my bed?” The others came up and each called out, —

“Somebody has been lying in my bed too.” But the seventh when he looked at his bed saw little Snow-white, who was lying asleep there. And he called the others, who came running up, and they cried out with wonder, and brought their seven little candles and let the light fall on little Snow-white.

“Oh, heavens! oh, heavens!” cried they, “what a lovely child!” and they were so glad that they did not wake her, but let her sleep on in the bed. And the seventh dwarf slept with the others, one hour with each, and so got through the night.

When it was morning little Snow-white awoke, and was afraid when she saw the seven dwarfs. But they were friendly and asked her what her name was.

“My name is Snow-white,” she answered.

“How have you come to our house?” said the dwarfs. Then she told them that the Queen had wished to have her killed, but that the Huntsman had spared her life; she had run for the whole day, until at last she had found their house. The dwarfs said, —

“If you will take care of our house, cook, make the beds, wash, sew, and knit; and if you

will keep everything neat and clean, you can stay with us, and you shall want for nothing."

"Yes," said Snow-white, "with all my heart," and she stayed with them. She kept the house in order for them; in the mornings they went to the hills and looked for gold; in the evenings they came back, and then their supper had to be ready. The girl was alone the whole day, so the good dwarfs warned her and said, —

"Beware of the Queen; she will soon know that you are here; be sure to let no one come in."

But the Queen, thinking she had eaten Snow-white's heart, began to suppose she was again the first and most beautiful person in the world; and she went to her Looking-glass and said, —

"Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all?"

and the Glass answered, —

"O Queen, thou art fairest of all I see,
But over the hills, where the seven dwarfs dwell,
Snow-white is still alive and well,
And no one is so fair as she."

And so she thought and thought again how she might kill Snow-white, for so long as she was not the fairest in the whole land, envy let her have no rest. And when she had at last thought of something to do, she painted her face, and dressed herself like an old peddler-woman, and no one could have known her.

Then she went over the seven hills to the seven dwarfs, and knocked at the door and cried, —

“Pretty things to sell, very cheap, very cheap.” Little Snow-white looked out of the window and called out, —

“Good-day, my good woman, what have you to sell?”

“Good things, pretty things,” she answered; “stay-laces of all colors,” and she pulled out one which was woven of bright silk.

“I may let the good old woman in,” thought Snow-white, and she unbolted the door and bought the pretty laces.

“Child,” said the old woman, “what a fright you look; come, I will lace you properly for once.” Snow-white stood before her, and let herself be laced with the new laces. But the old woman laced so quickly and laced so tightly that Snow-white lost her breath and fell down as if dead. “Now I am the most beautiful,” said the Queen to herself, and ran away.

Not long after, in the evening, the seven dwarfs came home, but how shocked they were when they saw their dear little Snow-white lying on the ground; she did not stir or move, and seemed to be dead. They lifted her up, and, as they saw that she was laced too tightly, they cut the laces; then she began to breathe a little, and after a while came to life again. When the dwarfs heard what had happened they said, —

"The old peddler-woman was no one else than the wicked Queen; take care and let no one come in when we are not with you."

But the wicked woman when she was at home again went in front of the Glass and asked, —

"Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all?"

and it answered as before, —

"O Queen, thou art fairest of all I see,
But over the hills, where the seven dwarfs dwell,
Snow-white is still alive and well,
And no one is so fair as she."

When she heard that, all her blood rushed to her heart with fear, for she saw plainly that little Snow-white was again alive.

"But now," she said, "I will think of something that shall put an end to you," and so she made a comb that was full of poison. Then she took the shape of another old woman. So she went over the seven hills to the seven dwarfs, knocked at the door, and cried, "Good things to sell, cheap, cheap!" Little Snow-white looked out and said, —

"Go away; I cannot let any one come in."

"I suppose you can look," said the old woman, and pulled the comb out and held it up. It pleased the girl so well that she let herself be coaxed and opened the door. When they had made a bargain the old woman said, "Now I will comb you properly for once." Poor little Snow-

white had no fear, and let the old woman do as she pleased, but hardly had she put the comb in her hair than the poison worked, and the girl fell down senseless.

“You piece of beauty,” said the wicked woman, “you are done for now,” and she went away.

But as good luck would have it, it was almost evening, and the seven dwarfs soon came home. When they saw Snow-white lying as if dead upon the ground, they knew at once the Queen had been there, and they looked and found the comb. Scarcely had they taken it out when Snow-white came to herself, and told them what had happened. Then they warned her once more to be upon her guard and to open the door to no one.

The Queen, at home, went in front of the Glass and said, —

“Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all?”

then it answered as before, —

“O Queen, thou art fairest of all I see,
But over the hills, where the seven dwarfs dwell,
Snow-white is still alive and well,
And no one is so fair as she.”

When she heard the Glass speak thus she trembled and shook with rage.

“Snow-white shall die,” she cried, “even if it costs me my life!”

She went into a quite secret, lonely room, where no one ever came, and there she made an apple full of poison. It was white with a red cheek, so that every one who saw it longed for it; but whoever ate a piece of it must surely die.

When the apple was ready she painted her face, and dressed herself up as a country-woman, and so she went over the seven hills to the seven dwarfs. She knocked at the door. Snow-white put her head out of the window and said, —

“I cannot let any one in; the seven dwarfs have told me not to.”

“It is all the same to me,” said the woman, “I shall soon get rid of my apples. There, I will give you one.”

“No,” said Snow-white, “I dare not take anything.”

“Are you afraid of poison?” said the old woman; “look, I will cut the apple in two pieces; you eat the red cheek, and I will eat the white.” The apple was so cunningly made that only the red cheek was poisoned. Snow-white longed for the fine apple, and when she saw that the woman ate part of it she could stand it no longer, and stretched out her hand and took the other half. But hardly had she a bit of it in her mouth than she fell down dead. Then the Queen looked at her with a dreadful look, and laughed aloud and said, —

“ White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony-wood ! this time the dwarfs cannot wake you up again.”

And when she asked of the Looking-glass at home, —

“ Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all ? ”

it answered at last, —

“ O Queen, in this land thou art fairest of all.”

Then her envious heart had rest, so far as an envious heart can have rest.

When the dwarfs came home in the evening, they found Snow-white lying upon the ground ; she breathed no longer and was dead. They lifted her up, unlaced her, combed her hair, washed her with water and wine, but it was all of no use ; the poor child was dead, and stayed dead. They laid her upon a bier, and all seven of them sat round it and wept for her, and wept three whole days.

Then they were going to bury her, but she still looked as if she were living, and still had her pretty red cheeks. They said, —

“ We could not bury her in the dark ground,” and they had a coffin of glass made, so that she could be seen from all sides, and they laid her in it, and wrote her name upon it in golden letters, and that she was a king’s daughter. Then they put the coffin out upon the hill, and one of them always stayed by it and watched it. And birds

came too, and wept for Snow-white ; first an owl, then a raven, and last a dove.

And now Snow-white lay a long, long time in the coffin, and she did not change, but looked as if she were asleep ; for she was as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony.

It happened that a King's son came into the wood, and went to the dwarfs' house to spend the night. He saw the coffin on the hill, and the beautiful Snow-white within it, and read what was written upon it in golden letters. Then he said to the dwarfs, —

“Let me have the coffin, I will give you whatever you want for it.” But the dwarfs answered, —

“We will not part with it for all the gold in the world.” Then he said, —

“Let me have it as a gift, for I cannot live without seeing Snow-white. I will honor and prize her as the dearest thing I have.” As he spoke in this way the good dwarfs took pity upon him, and gave him the coffin.

And now the King's son had it carried away by his servants on their shoulders. And it happened that they stumbled over a tree-stump, and with the shock the piece of apple which Snow-white had bitten off came out of her throat. And before long she opened her eyes, lifted up the lid of the coffin, sat up, and was once more alive.

“ Oh, heavens, where am I ? ” she cried. The King’s son, full of joy, said, —

“ You are with me,” and told her what had happened, and said, “ I love you more than everything in the world ; come with me to my father’s palace ; you shall be my wife.”

Snow-white was willing, and went with him, and their wedding was held with great show and splendor. The wicked Queen was also bidden to the feast. When she had put on her beautiful clothes, she went before the Looking-glass, and said, —

“ Looking-glass, Looking-glass, on the wall,
Who in this land is the fairest of all ? ”

the Glass answered, —

“ O Queen, of all here the fairest art thou,
But the young Queen is fairer by far I trow.”

Then the wicked woman gave a scream, and was so wretched, so utterly wretched, that she knew not what to do. At first she would not go to the wedding at all, but she had no peace, and must go to see the young Queen. And when she went in she knew Snow-white ; and she stood still with rage and fear, and could not stir. But iron slippers had already been put upon the fire, and they were brought in with tongs, and set before her. Then she was forced to put on the red-hot shoes, and dance until she dropped down dead.

THE STRAW, THE COAL, AND THE BEAN.

IN a village dwelt a poor old woman, who had picked together a dish of beans and wanted to cook them. So she made a fire on her hearth, and to make it burn the quicker she lighted it with a handful of straw. When she was emptying the beans into the pan, one dropped without her seeing it; it lay on the ground beside a straw, and soon afterwards a hot coal from the fire leapt down to the two. Then the Straw began and said, —

“Dear friends, how do you come here?”

The Coal replied, —

“I sprang out of the fire, and if I had not got away by main force, I must have met my death; I should have been burnt to ashes.”

The Bean said, —

“I, too, have got off with a whole skin, for if the old woman had got me into the pan, I should have been made into broth, like my comrades.”

“And would my lot have been better?” asked the Straw. “The old woman has destroyed all my brethren in fire and smoke; she seized sixty of them at once, and took their lives. Luckily I slipped through her fingers.”

"But what are we to do now?" said the Coal.

"I think," answered the Bean, "that as we have so luckily escaped death, we should keep together like good comrades, and lest a new mischance should catch us here, we should go away together, and set off for a new country."

The plan pleased the two others, and they set out on their way in company. Soon they came to a little brook, and as there was no bridge or foot-plank, they did not know how they were to get over it. The Straw hit on a good idea, and said, —

"I will lay myself straight across, and then you can walk over on me as on a bridge." The Straw therefore stretched itself from one bank to the other, and the Coal, who was rather hot-headed, tripped quite boldly on to the newly built bridge. But when she had reached the middle, and heard the water rushing beneath her, she was, after all, afraid, and stood still, and would go no farther.

The Straw, however, began to burn, broke in two pieces, and fell into the stream. The Coal slipped after her, hissed when she got into the water, and breathed her last. The Bean, who had wisely stayed behind on the shore, could not but laugh at the event, was unable to stop, and laughed so heartily that she burst.

would have been all over with her, too, if,

by good fortune, a tailor who was traveling in search of work had not sat down to rest by the brook. As he had a tender heart he pulled out his needle and thread, and sewed her together. The Bean thanked him most prettily, but as the tailor used black thread, all beans since then have a black seam.

THE HUT IN THE WOOD.

A POOR wood-cutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the edge of a lonely wood. One morning as he was about to go to his work, he said to his wife, —

“Let my dinner be brought into the wood to me by my eldest daughter ; in that way I need not come home at noon and can do more work ; and in order that she may not miss her way, I will take a bag of millet with me and scatter the seeds on the path I take.” So when the sun was just above the centre of the wood, the girl set out on her way with a bowl of soup, but the field-sparrows, and wood-sparrows, the larks and finches, and blackbirds had picked up the millet long before, and the girl could not find the track. She went on and on, until the sun sank and night began to fall. The trees rustled in the darkness, the owls hooted, and she began to be afraid. Then in the distance she saw a light shining between the trees.

“There ought to be some people living there, who can take me in for the night,” she thought, and went up to the light. It was not long before she came to a house with the windows all

lighted up. She knocked, and a rough voice from the inside cried, —

“Come in.” The girl stepped into the dark hall, and knocked at the door of the room.

“Just come in,” cried the voice, and when she opened the door, an old gray-haired man was sitting at the table; his face was propped up by his hands, and his white beard fell down over the table almost as far as the ground. By the stove lay three animals, a hen, a cock, and a brindled cow. The girl told her story to the old man, and begged for shelter for the night. The man said, —

“Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?”

“Duks,” answered the animals, and that must have meant, “We are willing,” for the old man said, —

“Here you shall have shelter and food; go to the fire, and cook us our supper.” The girl found plenty of food in the kitchen, and cooked a good supper, but she did not think of the animals. She carried the full dishes to the table, seated herself by the gray-haired man, and ate till she was no longer hungry. Then she said, —

“But now I am tired; where is there a bed in which I can lie down, and sleep?” The animals replied, —

“Thou hast eaten with him,
Thou hast drunk with him,
Thou hast had no thought for us,
So find out for yourself where you can pass the night.”

Then said the old man, —

“Just go upstairs, and you will find a room with two beds; shake them up, and put white linen on them, and then I, too, will come and lie down to sleep.” The girl went up, and when she had shaken the beds and put clean sheets on, she lay down in one of them without waiting for the old man. After some time, however, the gray-haired man came, took his candle, looked at the girl, and shook his head. When he saw that she had fallen into a sound sleep, he opened a trap-door, and let her down into the cellar.

Late at night the wood-cutter came home, and asked his wife why she left him to hunger all day.

“It is not my fault,” she replied; “the girl went out with your dinner, and must have lost herself, but she is sure to come back to-morrow.” The wood-cutter, however, rose before dawn to go into the forest, and asked that the second daughter should take him his dinner that day.

“I will take a bag with lentils,” said he; “the seeds are larger than millet, the girl will see them better, and can’t lose her way.” So at dinner-time the girl took out the food, but there were no lentils to be seen. The birds had

picked them up as they had done the day before, and had left none. The girl wandered about in the wood until night, and then she too came to the house of the old man, was told to go in, and begged for food and a bed. The man with the white beard again asked the animals, —

“ Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that ? ”

The animals again replied, —

“ Duks,” and everything happened just as it had happened the day before. The girl cooked a good meal, ate and drank with the old man, and did not think about the animals, and when she asked about her bed they answered, —

“ Thou hast eaten with him,
Thou hast drunk with him,
Thou hast had no thought for us,
So find out for yourself where you can pass the night.”

When she was asleep the old man came, looked at her, shook his head, and let her down into the cellar.

On the third morning the wood-cutter said to his wife, —

“ Send our youngest child out with my dinner to-day ; she has always been good and obedient, and will stay in the right path, and not run about after every wild bumblebee, as her sisters did.” The mother did not want to do it, and said, —

“Am I to lose my dearest child, as well?”

“Have no fear,” he replied, “the girl will not go astray; she is too prudent and good; besides, I will take some peas with me, and strew them about. They are still larger than lentils, and will show her the way.” But when the girl went out with her basket on her arm, the wood-pigeons had already got all the peas in their crops, and she did not know which way she was to turn. She was full of sorrow as she thought how hungry her father would be, and how her good mother would grieve if she did not go home. At last when it grew dark, she saw the light and came to the hut in the wood. She begged quite prettily to be allowed to spend the night there, and the man with the white beard once more asked his animals, —

“Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that?”

“Duks,” said they. Then the girl went to the stove where the animals were lying, and petted the cock and hen; she stroked their smooth feathers with her hand, and rubbed the brindled cow between her horns, and when she had made ready some good soup, and the bowl was placed upon the table, she said, —

“Am I to eat as much as I want, and the good animals to have nothing? There is plenty

of food outside ; I will look after them first." So she went and brought some barley and strewed it for the cock and hen, and a whole armful of sweet-smelling hay for the cow.

" I hope you will like it, dear animals," said she, " and you shall have something to drink in case you are thirsty." Then she fetched in a pail of water, and the cock and hen jumped on to the edge of it and dipped their beaks in, and then held up their heads as the birds do when they drink, and the brindled cow also took a hearty draught. When the animals were fed, the girl seated herself at the table by the old man, and ate what he had left. It was not long before the cock and the hen began to thrust their heads beneath their wings, and the eyes of the cow likewise began to blink. Then said the girl, —

" Ought we not to go to bed ? "

" Pretty little hen,
Pretty little cock,
And pretty brindled cow,
What say ye to that ? "

The animals answered " Duks,"

" Thou hast eaten with us,
Thou hast drunk with us,
Thou hast had kind thought for all of us,
We wish thee good-night."

Then the maiden went upstairs, shook the feather-beds, and laid clean sheets on them, and when she had done it the old man came and lay

down on one of the beds, and his white beard reached down to his feet. The girl lay down on the other, said her prayers, and fell asleep.

She slept till midnight, and then there was such a noise in the house that she awoke. There was a sound of cracking and splitting in every corner, and the doors sprang open, and beat against the walls. The beams groaned as if they were being torn out of their joints; it seemed as if the stairs were falling down, and at last there was a crash as if the entire roof had fallen in. As, however, all grew quiet once more, and the girl was not hurt, she stayed lying where she was, and fell asleep again.

But when she woke up in the morning in the bright sunshine, what did her eyes see? She was lying in a vast hall, and everything around her shone with royal splendor; on the walls, golden flowers grew upon a ground of green silk; the bed was of ivory, and covered with red velvet; and on a chair close by was a pair of shoes worked with pearls. The girl thought she must be in a dream, but three richly clad servants came in, and asked what orders she would like to give?

"If you will go," she replied, "I will get up at once and make ready some soup for the old man, and then I will feed the pretty little hen, and the cock, and the beautiful brindled cow." She thought the old man was up already, and looked

round at his bed ; he, however, was not lying in it, but a stranger. And while she was looking at him, and saw that he was young and handsome, he awoke, sat up in bed, and said, —

“ I am a King’s son, and was bewitched and made to live in this wood as an old gray-haired man ; no one was allowed to be with me but my three servants in the form of a cock, a hen, and a brindled cow. The spell was not to be broken until a girl came to us whose heart was so good that she showed herself full of love, not only toward mankind, but toward animals ; and that you have done, and by you at midnight we were set free, and the old hut in the wood was changed back again into my royal palace.”

Now when they had arisen, the King’s son ordered the three servants to set out and fetch the father and mother of the girl to the marriage feast.

“ But where are my two sisters ? ” asked the maiden.

“ I have locked them in the cellar, and to-morrow they shall be led into the wood, and shall live as servants to a charcoal-burner, until they have grown kinder, and do not leave poor animals to suffer hunger.”

THE CUNNING LITTLE TAILOR.

THERE was once on a time a Princess who was very proud. If a wooer came she gave him some riddle to guess, and if he could not find it out, he was sent away. She let it be made known that any one who solved her riddle should marry her, let him be who he might.

Now three tailors fell in with each other ; the two eldest thought they had done so many good bits of work that they could not fail to come out all right in this also ; the third was a useless little lubber, who did not even know his trade, but thought he must have some luck this time, for where else was it to come from ? Then the two others said to him, —

“Just stay at home ; you cannot do much with your little bit of wisdom.”

But the little Tailor did not let himself be put down, and said he had set his head to work about this, and he would do well enough ; so he went forth as if the whole world were his.

They all three came before the Princess, and said she was to offer her riddle to them, and that the right persons were now come, for they had minds so fine that they could be threaded with a needle. Then said the Princess, —

"I have two kinds of hair on my head, of what color is it?"

"If that be all," said the first, "it must be black and white, like the cloth which is called 'pepper and salt.'" The Princess said, —

"Wrong, let the second answer." Then said the second, —

"If it be not black and white, then it is brown and red, like my father's company coat."

"Wrong again," said the Princess, "let the third give the answer, for I see very well he knows it for certain." Then the little Tailor stepped boldly forth and said, —

"The princess has a silver and a golden hair on her head, and those are the two colors." When the Princess heard that she turned pale and nearly fell down with fright, for the little Tailor had guessed her riddle, and she had firmly believed that no man on earth could find it out. When her courage came back she said, —

"You have not won me yet by that; there is still something else you must do. Below, in the stable, is a Bear, with which you are to pass the night, and when I get up in the morning if you are still alive you shall marry me." She thought she would thus get rid of the Tailor, for the Bear had never yet left any one alive who had fallen into his paws. The little Tailor did not let himself be driven away, but was quite merry, and said, —

“Nothing venture, nothing have.”

When evening came, our little Tailor was taken down to the Bear. The Bear was about to set at the little fellow at once, and give him a hearty welcome with his paws.

“Softly, softly,” said the little Tailor, “I have something for you.” Then quietly, and as if he had not a care in the world, he took some nuts out of his pocket, cracked them, and ate the kernels. When the Bear saw that, he had a great desire to have some nuts too. The Tailor felt in his pockets, and gave him a handful; they were not nuts, but pebbles. The Bear put them in his mouth, but could get nothing out of them, let him bite as he would.

“Eh!” thought he, “what a stupid block-head I am! I cannot even crack a nut!” and then he said to the Tailor, “Here, crack me the nuts.”

“There, see what a stupid fellow you are!” said the little Tailor, “to have such a great mouth, and not be able to crack a small nut!” Then he took the pebble and nimbly put a nut in his mouth in the place of it, and crack, it was in two!

“I must try the thing again,” said the Bear; “when I watch you, I then think I ought to be able to do it too.” So the Tailor once more gave him a pebble, and the Bear tried and tried to bite into it with all the strength of

his body. But no one will suppose he could do it.

When that was over, the Tailor took out a violin from under his coat, and played a piece on it to himself. When the Bear heard the music, he could not help beginning to dance, and when he had danced a while, the thing pleased him so well that he said to the little Tailor, —

“Hark you, is the fiddle heavy?”

“Light enough for a child. Look, with the left hand I lay my fingers on it, and with the right I stroke it with the bow, and then it goes merrily, hop sa sa tra la la!”

“So,” said the Bear; “fiddling is a thing I should like to know too, that I might dance whenever I had a fancy. What do you think of that? Will you give me lessons?”

“With all my heart,” said the Tailor, “if you have a talent for it. But just let me see your claws; they are much too long; I must cut your nails a little.” Then a vice was brought, and the Bear put his claws in it, and the little Tailor screwed it tight, and said, —

“Now wait until I come with the scissors,” and he let the Bear growl as he liked, and lay down in the corner on a bundle of straw, and fell asleep.

When the Princess heard the Bear growling so fiercely during the night, she thought no-

thing else but that he was growling for joy, and had made an end of the Tailor. In the morning she arose careless and happy, but when she peeped into the stable, the Tailor stood gayly before her, and was as healthy as a fish in the water.

Now she could not say another word against the wedding because she had given a promise before every one, and the King called for a carriage in which she was to drive to church with the Tailor, and there she was to be married.

When they had got into the carriage, the two other tailors, who had false hearts and envied him his good fortune, went into the stable and let the Bear out of the vice. The Bear in great fury ran after the carriage. The Princess heard him snorting and growling; she was in great fear, and cried, —

“Ah, the Bear is behind us and wants to get you!” The Tailor was quick, and stood on his head, stuck his legs out of the window, and cried, —

“Do you see the vice? If you do not be off you shall be put into it again.” When the Bear saw that, he turned round and ran away. The Tailor drove quietly to church, and the Princess was married to him at once, and he lived with her as happy as a woodlark. Whoever does not believe this must pay a dollar.

THE SPINDLE, THE SHUTTLE, AND THE NEEDLE.

THERE was once a girl whose father and mother died while she was still a little child. All alone, in a small house at the end of the village, lived her Godmother, who made a living by spinning, weaving, and sewing. The old woman took the poor child to live with her, kept her at work, and trained her in all good ways. When the girl was fifteen years old, the old woman fell ill ; she called the child to her bedside, and said, —

“ Dear daughter, I feel my end drawing near. I leave you the little house, which will shield you from wind and weather ; and my spindle, shuttle, and needle, with which you can earn your bread.” Then she laid her hands on the girl’s head, blessed her, and said, “ Only be good, and all will go well with you.”

At that she closed her eyes. When she was laid in the earth, the maiden followed the coffin, and paid her the last mark of respect. And now the maiden lived quite alone in the little house, and was busy all day ; she spun, and wove, and sewed, and the blessing of the good

old woman was on all she did. It seemed as if there was always all the flax she needed ; whenever she wove a piece of cloth or carpet, or had made a shirt, she at once found a buyer who paid her well for it ; so she was in want of nothing, and even had something to share with others.

About this time, the son of the King was traveling about the country looking for a bride. He was not to choose a poor one, and did not want to have a rich one. So he said, —

“ She shall be my wife who is the poorest, and at the same time the richest.” When he came to the village where the maiden lived, he asked, as he did wherever he went, who was the richest and also the poorest girl in the place ? They first named the richest ; the poorest, they said, was the girl who lived in the small house quite at the end of the village.

The rich girl was sitting in all her finery before the door of her house, and when the Prince came near, she got up, went to meet him, and made him a low curtsy. He looked at her, said nothing, and rode on.

When he came to the house of the poor girl, she was not standing at the door, but sitting in her little room. He stopped his horse, and looked through the window, on which the bright sun was shining ; there he saw the girl sitting at her spinning-wheel, spinning busily.

She looked up, and when she saw the Prince looking in, she blushed, let her eyes fall, and went on spinning. I do not know if the thread was quite even, just at that moment; but she went on spinning until the King's son had ridden away again. Then she went to the window, opened it, and said, —

“It is so warm in this room!” but she still looked after him as long as she could make out the white feathers in his hat. Then she sat down to work again in her own room, and went on with her spinning. A saying of the old woman came into her mind, and she sang these words to herself, —

“Spindle, my spindle, haste, haste thee away,
And here to my house bring the wooer, I pray.”

Now what do you think happened? The spindle sprang out of her hand and flew out of the door; when she got up and looked after it, she saw that it was dancing merrily into the open country, and drawing a shining golden thread after it. Before long, it had gone wholly from her sight. As she had now no spindle, the girl took the weaver's shuttle in her hand, sat down to her loom, and began to weave.

The spindle danced on, and just as the thread came to an end, reached the Prince.

“What do I see?” he cried; “the spindle surely wants to show me the way!” so he

turned his horse about, and rode back with the golden thread. The girl was sitting at her work, singing, —

“Shuttle, my shuttle, weave well this day,
And guide the wooer to me, I pray.”

Now what do you think happened? The shuttle sprang out of her hand and out by the door. Once outside, it began to weave a carpet which was more beautiful than the eyes of man had ever yet beheld. There were lilies and roses on both sides of it; and on a golden ground in the centre, you could see green branches; and beneath hares and rabbits, stags and deer, pushed their heads in between them; bright birds were sitting in the branches above; they looked almost ready to sing. The shuttle leapt hither and thither, and everything seemed to grow of its own accord.

As the shuttle had run away, the girl sat down to sew. She held the needle in her hand, and sang, —

“Needle, my needle, sharp-pointed and fine,
Prepare for a wooer this house of mine.”

Then the needle leapt out of her fingers, and flew everywhere about the room as quick as lightning. It was just as if unseen spirits were working; they covered tables and benches with green cloth in an instant, and the chairs with velvet, and hung the windows with silken curtains.

Hardly had the needle put in the last stitch, when the maiden saw through the window the white feathers of the Prince; the spindle had brought him by the golden thread. He got down and stepped upon the carpet into the house; when he went into the room, there stood the maiden in her poor clothes, but she shone out from within them like a rose surrounded by leaves.

“Thou art the poorest and also the richest,” said he to her. “Come with me, thou shalt be my bride.” She did not speak, but she gave him her hand. Then he gave her a kiss, led her forth, lifted her on to his horse, and took her to the royal castle; there the wedding was held with great pomp. The spindle, the shuttle, and the needle were kept in the treasure-room, and held in great honor.

THE THREE SPINNERS.

THERE was once a girl who was idle and would not spin, and her mother, say what she would, could not bring her to it. At last the mother lost her temper and beat her, at which the girl began to weep loudly. Now at this very moment the Queen drove by, and when she heard the weeping she stopped her carriage, went into the house, and asked the mother why she was beating her daughter so that the cries could be heard out in the road ?

The woman was ashamed to tell how lazy her daughter was, and said, —

“I cannot get her to leave off spinning. She insists on spinning for ever and ever, and I am poor, and cannot get the flax for her.” Then the Queen answered, —

“There is nothing I like better to hear than spinning, and I am never happier than when the wheels are humming. Let me have your daughter with me in the palace ; I have flax enough, and there she shall spin as much as she likes.”

The mother was well pleased with this, and the Queen took the girl with her. When they

had arrived at the palace, the Queen led the girl up into three rooms which were filled from the bottom to the top with the finest flax.

“Now spin me this flax,” said she, “and when you have done it, you shall have my eldest son for a husband, even if you are poor. I care not for that; you are a hard-working girl, and that is enough.”

The girl was scared out of her wits, for she could not have spun the flax, no, not if she had lived till she was three hundred years old, and had sat at it every day from morning till night. So when she was alone, she began to weep, and sat thus for three days without moving a finger. On the third day the Queen came, and wondered when she saw nothing had been spun yet; but the girl said she had not been able to begin because she felt so badly at leaving her mother's house. The Queen was sorry for her, but said when she was going away, —

“To-morrow you must begin to work.”

When the girl was alone again, she did not know what to do, and in her distress went to the window. There she saw three women coming toward her; the first had a broad flat foot, the second had such a great under lip that it hung down over her chin, and the third had a broad thumb. They stood before the window, and looked up, and asked the girl what was the

matter with her? She told her trouble, and they said they would help her, but added, —

“If you will invite us to the wedding, not be ashamed of us, and will call us your aunts; and if you will place us at your table, we will spin the flax for you, and that in a very short time.”

“With all my heart,” she replied; “do but come in and begin the work at once.” Then she let in the three strange women, and cleared a place in the first room, where they sat down and began their spinning. One drew the thread and trod the wheel, the second wetted the thread, the third twisted it, and struck the table with her finger; and as often as she struck it, a skein of thread, that was spun in the finest manner possible, fell to the ground. The girl hid the three spinners from the Queen, and showed her, whenever she came, the great heap of spun thread, until the Queen could not praise her enough. When the first room was empty she went to the second, and at last to the third, and that too was quickly cleared. Then the three women took leave, and said to the girl, —

“Do not forget what you have promised us, — it will make your fortune.”

When the maiden showed the Queen the empty rooms, and the great heap of yarn, she gave orders for the wedding. Her son was

glad that he was to have such a clever and hard-working wife, and praised her well.

"I have three aunts," said the girl, "and as they have been very kind to me, I should not like to forget them in my good fortune; let me ask them to the wedding, and let them sit with us at table." The Queen and the bridegroom said, —

"Why not?" So when the feast began, the three women entered in strange dress, and the bride said, —

"Welcome, dear aunts."

"Ah," said the bridegroom, "how do you come by these odious friends?" He went to the one with the broad flat foot, and said, —

"How do you come by such a broad foot?"

"By treading," she answered, "by treading." Then the bridegroom went to the second and said, —

"How do you come by your falling lip?"

"By licking," she answered, "by licking." Then he asked the third, —

"How do you come by your broad thumb?"

"By twisting the thread," she answered, "by twisting the thread." On this the King's son took fright and said, —

"Neither now nor ever shall my beautiful bride touch a spinning-wheel." And thus she got rid of the hateful flax-spinning.

HANSEL AND GRETHEL.

HARD by a great forest dwelt a poor wood-cutter with his wife and the two children he had before he married his wife. The boy was called Hansel and the girl Grethel. The wood-cutter had little to bite and to break, and once when a great famine fell on the land he could no longer get daily bread. Now when he thought over this by night in his bed, and tossed about in his trouble, he groaned, and said to his wife, —

“What is to become of us? How are we to feed our poor children, when we no longer have anything even for ourselves?”

“I’ll tell you what, husband,” answered the woman; “early to-morrow morning we will take the children out into the woods where it is the thickest; there we will light a fire for them, and give each of them one piece of bread more, and then we will go to our work and leave them alone. They will not find the way home again, and we shall be rid of them.”

“No, wife,” said the man, “I will not do that; how can I bear to leave my children alone in the woods? — the wild beasts would soon come and tear them to pieces.”

“Oh, you fool!” said she. “Then we must all four die of hunger; you may as well plane the planks for our coffins,” and she left him no peace until he said he would do as she wished. “But I feel very sorry for the poor children, all the same,” said the man.

The two children had also not been able to sleep for hunger, and had heard what their father’s wife had said to their father. Grethel wept bitter tears, and said to Hansel, —

“Now all is over with us.”

“Be quiet, Grethel,” said Hansel, “do not be troubled; I will soon find a way to help us.” And when the old folks had fallen asleep, he got up, put on his little coat, opened the door below, and crept outside. The moon shone brightly, and the white pebbles which lay in front of the house shone like real silver pennies. Hansel stooped and put as many of them in the little pocket of his coat as he could make room for. Then he went back, and said to Grethel, —

“Be at ease, dear little sister, and sleep in peace; God will not forsake us,” and he lay down again in his bed. When day dawned, but before the sun had risen, the woman came and awoke the two children, saying, —

“Get up, you lazy things! we are going into the forest to fetch wood.” She gave each a little piece of bread, and said, “There is something for your dinner, but do not eat it up

before then, for you will get nothing else." Grethel took the bread under her apron, as Hansel had the stones in his pocket. Then they all set out together on the way to the forest. When they had walked a short time, Hansel stood still and peeped back at the house, and did so again and again. His father said, —

"Hansel, what are you looking at there and staying behind for? Mind what you are about, and do not forget how to use your legs."

"Ah, father," said Hansel, "I am looking at my little white cat, which is sitting up on the roof, and wants to say good-by to me." The wife said, —

"Fool, that is not your little cat; that is the morning sun which is shining on the chimneys." Hansel, however, had not been looking back at the cat, but had been throwing one after another of the white pebble-stones out of his pocket on the road. When they had reached the middle of the forest, the father said, —

"Now, children, pile up some wood, and I will light a fire that you may not be cold." Hansel and Grethel drew brushwood together till it was as high as a little hill. The brushwood was lighted, and when the flames were burning very high the woman said, —

"Now, children, lie down by the fire and rest; we will go into the forest and cut some wood. When we have done, we will come back and fetch you away."

Hansel and Grethel sat by the fire, and when noon came, each ate a little piece of bread, and as they heard the strokes of the wood-axe they were sure their father was near. But it was not the axe, it was a branch which he had tied to a dry tree, and the wind was blowing it backward and forward. As they had been sitting such a long time they were tired, their eyes shut, and they fell fast asleep. When at last they awoke, it was dark night. Grethel began to cry, and said, —

“How are we to get out of the forest now?”
But Hansel comforted her, and said, —

“Just wait a little, until the moon has risen, and then we will soon find the way.” And when the full moon had risen, Hansel took his little sister by the hand, and followed the pebbles, which shone like bright silver pieces, and showed them the way.

They walked the whole night long, and by break of day came once more to their father's house. They knocked at the door, and when the woman opened it and saw that it was Hansel and Grethel, she said, —

“You naughty children, why have you slept so long in the forest? we thought you were never coming back at all!” The father, however, was glad, for it had cut him to the heart to leave them behind alone.

Not long after, there was once more a great

lack of food in all parts, and the children heard the woman saying at night to their father, —

“ Everything is eaten again ; we have one half loaf left, and after that there is an end. The children must go ; we will take them farther into the wood, so that they will not find their way out again ; there is no other means of saving ourselves ! ” The man’s heart was heavy, and he thought, —

“ It would be better to share our last mouthful with the children. ” The woman, however, would listen to nothing he had to say, but scolded him. He who says A must say B, too, and as he had given way the first time, he had to do so a second time also.

The children were still awake and had heard the talk. When the old folks were asleep, Hansel again got up, and wanted to go out and pick up pebbles, but the woman had locked the door, and he could not get out. So he comforted his little sister, and said, —

“ Do not cry, Grethel ; go to sleep quietly, the good God will help us. ”

Early in the morning came the woman, and took the children out of their beds. Their bit of bread was given to them, but it was still smaller than the time before. On the way into the forest Hansel crumbled his in his pocket, and often stood still and threw a morsel on the ground.

“Hansel, why do you stop and look round?” said the father; “go on.”

“I am looking back at my little pigeon which is sitting on the roof, and wants to say good-by to me,” answered Hansel.

“You goose!” said the woman, “that is not your little pigeon; that is the morning sun that is shining on the chimney.” Hansel, however, little by little, threw all the crumbs on the path.

The woman led the children still deeper into the forest, where they had never in their lives been before. Then a great fire was again made, and she said, —

“Just sit there, you children, and when you are tired you may sleep a little; we are going into the forest to cut wood, and in the evening when we are done, we will come and fetch you away.”

When it was noon, Grethel shared her piece of bread with Hansel, who had scattered his by the way. Then they fell asleep, and evening came and went, but no one came to the poor children. They did not awake until it was dark night, and Hansel comforted his little sister, and said, —

“Just wait, Grethel, until the moon rises, and then we shall see the crumbs of bread which I have scattered about; they will show us our way home again.” When the moon came they set out, but they found no crumbs, for the many thousands of birds which fly about in

the woods and fields had picked them all up. Hansel said to Grethel, —

“ We shall soon find the way,” but they did not find it. They walked the whole night and all the next day too, from morning till evening, but they did not get out of the forest; they were very hungry, for they had nothing to eat but two or three berries, which grew on the ground. And as they were so tired that their legs would carry them no longer, they lay down under a tree and fell asleep.

It was now three mornings since they had left their father’s house. They began to walk again, but they always got deeper into the forest, and if help did not come soon, they must die of hunger and weariness. When it was midday, they saw a beautiful snow-white bird sitting on a bough. It sang so sweetly that they stood still and listened to it. And when it had done, it spread its wings and flew away before them, and they followed it until they reached a little house, on the roof of which it perched; and when they came quite up to the little house, they saw that it was built of bread and covered with cakes, but that the windows were of clear sugar.

“ We will set to work on that,” said Hansel, “ and have a good meal. I will eat a bit of the roof, and you, Grethel, can eat some of the window, it will taste sweet.” Hansel reached

up, and broke off a little of the roof to try how it tasted, and Grethel leant against the window and nibbled at the panes.

Then a soft voice cried from the room, —

“Nibble, nibble, gnaw,
Who is nibbling at my little house?”

The children answered, —

“The wind, the wind,
The wind from heaven,”

and went on eating. Hansel, who thought the roof tasted very nice, tore down a great piece of it; and Grethel pushed out the whole of one round window-pane, sat down, and went to eating it.

All at once the door opened, and a very, very old woman, who leaned on crutches, came creeping out. Hansel and Grethel were so scared that they let fall what they had in their hands. The old woman, however, nodded her head, and said, —

“Oh, you dear children, who has brought you here? Do come in, and stay with me. No harm shall happen to you.” She took them both by the hand, and led them into her little house. Then good food was set before them, milk and pancakes, with sugar, apples, and nuts. Afterwards two pretty little beds were covered with clean white linen, and Hansel and Grethel lay down in them, and thought they were in heaven.

The old woman had only pretended to be so

kind; she was in reality a wicked witch, who lay in wait for children, and had only built the little bread house in order to coax them there.

Early in the morning, before the children were awake, she was already up, and when she saw both of them sleeping and looking so pretty, with their plump red cheeks, she muttered to herself, —

“That will be a dainty mouthful!” Then she seized Hansel, carried him into a little stable, and shut him in behind a grated door. He might scream as he liked, it was of no use. Then she went to Grethel, shook her till she awoke, and cried, —

“Get up, lazy thing; fetch some water, and cook something good for your brother; he is in the stable outside, and is to be made fat. When he is fat, I will eat him.” Grethel began to weep, but it was all in vain; she was forced to do what the wicked witch told her.

And now the best food was cooked for poor Hansel, but Grethel got nothing but crab-shells. Every morning the woman crept to the little stable, and cried, —

“Hansel, stretch out your finger that I may feel if you will soon be fat.” Hansel, however, stretched out a little bone to her, and the old woman, who had dim eyes, could not see it; she thought it was Hansel’s finger, and wondered why he grew no fatter. When four weeks had

gone by, and Hansel still was thin, she could wait no longer, —

“Come, Grethel,” she cried to the girl, “fly round and bring some water. Let Hansel be fat or lean, to-morrow I will kill him, and cook him.” Ah, how sad was the poor little sister when she had to fetch the water, and how her tears did flow down over her cheeks!

“Dear God, do help us,” she cried. “If the wild beasts in the forest had but eaten us, we should at any rate have died together.”

“Just keep your noise to yourself,” said the old woman; “all that won’t help you at all.”

Early in the morning, Grethel had to go out and hang up the kettle with the water, and light the fire.

“We will bake first,” said the old woman. “I have already heated the oven, and got the dough ready.” She pushed poor Grethel out to the oven, from which flames of fire were already darting.

“Creep in,” said the witch, “and see if it is heated, so that we can shut the bread in.” And when once Grethel was inside, she meant to shut the oven and let her bake in it, and then she would eat her, too. But Grethel saw what she had in her mind, and said, “I do not know how I am to do it; how do you get in?”

“Silly goose,” said the old woman. “The door is big enough; just look, I can get in myself!”

and she crept up and thrust her head into the oven. Then Grethel gave her a push that drove her far into it, and shut the iron door, tight.

Grethel ran as quick as lightning to Hansel, opened his little stable, and cried, "Hansel, we are saved! The old witch is dead!" Then Hansel sprang out like a bird from its cage when the door is opened for it. How they did dance about and kiss each other! And as they had no longer any need to fear her, they went into the witch's house, and in every corner there stood chests full of pearls and jewels.

"These are far better than pebbles!" said Hansel, and filled his pockets, and Grethel said,

"I, too, will take something home with me," and filled her pinafore full.

"But now we will go away," said Hansel, "that we may get out of the witch's forest." When they had walked for two hours, they came to a great piece of water. "We cannot get over," said Hansel; "I see no foot-plank, and no bridge."

"And no boat crosses, either," answered Grethel, "but a white duck is swimming there; if I ask her, she will help us over." Then she cried, —

"Little duck, little duck, dost thou see,
Hansel and Grethel are waiting for thee?
There's never a plank or bridge in sight,
Take us across on thy back so white."

The duck came to them, and Hansel sat on its back, and told his sister to sit by him.

"No," replied Grethel, "that will be too heavy for the little duck; she shall take us across, one after the other." The good little duck did so, and when they were once safely across and had walked for a short time, they knew where they were, and at last they saw from afar their father's house.

Then they began to run, rushed in, and threw themselves into their father's arms. The man had not known one happy hour since he had left the children in the forest; the woman, however, was dead. Grethel emptied her pinafore until pearls and precious stones ran about the room, and Hansel threw one handful after another out of his pocket to add to them. Then all care was at an end, and they lived happily together ever after.

My tale is done; there runs a mouse; whosoever catches it may make himself a big fur cap out of it.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN.

ONCE there was a poor Miller, who had a beautiful daughter. Now it happened that he had to go and speak to the King, and in order to be well thought of, he said to the King, —

“I have a daughter who can spin straw into gold.” The King said to the Miller, —

“That is an art which pleases me well ; if your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to-morrow to my palace, and I will try what she can do.”

When the girl was brought to him he took her into a room which was full of straw, gave her a spinning-wheel and a reel, and said, —

“Now set to work, and if by to-morrow morning early you have not spun this straw into gold, you must die.” Then he locked up the room, and left her in it alone. So there sat the poor Miller’s daughter, and for her life could not tell what to do ; she had no idea how straw could be spun into gold, and she grew more and more sad, until at last she began to weep.

All at once the door opened, and in came a little man, and said, —

“ Good-evening, Mistress Miller ; why are you crying so ? ”

“ Alas ! ” answered the girl, “ I have to spin straw into gold, and I do not know how to do it.”

“ What will you give me,” said the little man, “ if I do it for you ? ”

“ My necklace,” said the girl. The little man took the necklace, seated himself in front of the wheel, and whirr, whirr, whirr, three turns, and the reel was full ; then he put another on, and whirr, whirr, whirr, three times round, and the second was full, too. And so it went on until the morning, when all the straw was spun, and all the reels were full of gold.

By daybreak the King was already there, and when he saw the gold he was full of wonder and delight, but his heart became only more greedy. He had the Miller’s daughter taken into another larger room full of straw, and bade her spin that also in one night if she cared for her life. The girl knew not how to help herself, and was crying, when the door again opened, and the little man came in, and said, —

“ What will you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you ? ”

“ The ring on my finger,” said the girl. The little man took the ring, again began to turn the wheel, and by morning had spun all the straw into gold.

The King rejoiced beyond measure at the

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sight, but still he had not gold enough ; and he had the Miller's daughter taken into a still larger room full of straw, and said, —

“ You must spin this, too, in the course of this night ; but if you succeed, you shall be my wife.” “ Even if she be a Miller's daughter,” thought he, “ I could not find a richer wife in the whole world.”

When the girl was alone the little man came again for the third time, and said, —

“ What will you give me if I spin the straw for you this time also ? ”

“ I have nothing left that I could give,” answered the girl.

“ Then promise me, if you should become Queen, your first child.”

“ Who knows if that will ever happen ? ” thought the Miller's daughter ; and, not knowing how else to help herself, she told the little man he should have what he wanted, and for that he once more spun the straw into gold.

And when the King came in the morning, and found all as he had wished, he married her, and the pretty Miller's daughter became a Queen.

A year after, she had a beautiful child, and she never gave a thought to the little man. But all at once he came into her room, and said,

“ Now give me what you said you would.” The Queen was in terror, and offered the little

man all the riches of the kingdom if he would leave her the child. But he said, —

“No, something that is living is dearer to me than all the treasures in the world.” Then the Queen began to weep, so that the little man pitied her. “I will give you three days’ time,” said he; “if by that time you find out my name, then shall you keep your child.”

So the Queen thought the whole night long of all the names she had ever heard, and she sent over the country to ask, far and wide, for any other names there might be. When the little man came the next day, she said all the names she knew, one after another; but to every one the little man said, —

“That is not my name.” On the second day the man she had sent over the country came back with all the names he could find; she said over the strange ones to the little man.

“Perhaps your name is Shortribs, or Sheepshanks, or Laceleg?” but he always answered,

“That is not my name.”

On the third day the man she had sent out came back again, and said, —

“I have not been able to find a single new name, but as I came to a high mountain at the end of the wood, where the Fox and the Hare bid each other good-night, there I saw a little house; and before the house a fire was burning, and round about the fire a queer little man

was jumping: he hopped upon one leg, and shouted, —

“To-day I bake, to-morrow brew,
The next I'll have the young Queen's child.
Ha! glad am I that no one knew
That Rumpelstiltskin I am styled.’”

You may think how glad the Queen was when she heard the name! And when soon after the little man came in, and asked, —

“Now, Mistress Queen, what is my name?”
at first she said, —

“Is your name Conrad?”

“No.”

“Is your name Harry?”

“No.”

“Perhaps your name is Rumpelstiltskin?”

“Who has told you that? who has told you that?” cried the little man, and in his anger he drove his right foot so deep into the earth that his whole leg went in; and then in rage he pulled at his left leg so hard with both hands that he tore himself in two.

THE WONDERFUL MUSICIAN.

THERE was once a wonderful maker of music, who went quite alone through a wood and thought of all manner of things, and when nothing was left for him to think about, he said to himself, —

“Time begins to pass slowly with me here in the woods; I will fetch hither a good comrade for myself.” Then he took his fiddle from his back, and played so that it echoed through the trees. It was not long before a Wolf came trotting through the thicket toward him.

“Ah, here is a Wolf coming! I don’t want him!” said the Musician; but the Wolf came nearer and said to him, —

“Ah, dear Musician, how finely you play! I should like to learn that, too.”

“It is soon learnt,” the Musician replied; “you have only to do all I bid you.”

“Oh, Musician,” said the Wolf, “I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master.” The Musician bade him follow, and when they had gone part of the way together, they came to an old oak-tree which was hollow inside, and cleft in the middle.

“Look,” said the Musician, “if you will learn to fiddle, put your fore-paws into this crack.” The Wolf obeyed, but the Musician quickly picked up a stone and with one blow wedged the Wolf’s two paws so fast that he was forced to stay there like a prisoner.

“Stay there until I come back again,” said the Musician, and went his way. After a while he again said to himself, —

“Time begins to pass slowly with me here in the woods; I will fetch hither another comrade,” and took his fiddle and again played in the woods. It was not long before a Fox came creeping through the trees toward him.

“Ah, there’s a Fox coming!” said the Musician. “I don’t want him.” The Fox came up to him and said, —

“Oh, dear Musician, how finely you play! I should like to learn that, too.”

“That is soon learnt,” said the Musician; “you have only to do all I bid you.”

“Oh, Musician,” then said the Fox, “I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master.”

“Follow me,” said the Musician; and when they had walked a part of the way, they came to a footpath, with high bushes on both sides of it. There the Musician stood still, and from one side bent a young hazel-bush down to the ground, and put his foot on the top of it; then he bent down a young tree from the other side well, and said, —

"Now, little Fox, if you will learn something, give me your left front paw." The Fox obeyed, and the Musician fastened his paw to the left bough. "Little Fox," said he, "now reach me your right paw," and he tied it to the right bough. When he had looked to see if they were firm enough, he let go, and the bushes sprang up again, and jerked up the little Fox, so that it hung struggling in the air.

"Wait there till I come back again," said the Musician, and went his way. Again he said to himself, —

"Time begins to pass slowly with me here in the woods; I will fetch hither another comrade," so he took his fiddle, and the sound echoed through the woods. Then a little Hare came springing toward him.

"Why, a Hare is coming," said the Musician; "I do not want him."

"Ah, dear Musician," said the Hare, "how finely you fiddle; I, too, should like to learn that."

"That is soon learnt," said the Musician; "you have only to do all I bid you."

"Oh, Musician," replied the little Hare, "I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master." They went a part of the way together until they came to an open space in the woods, where stood an aspen-tree. The Musician tied a long string round the little Hare's neck, the other end of which he fastened to the tree.

"Now briskly, little Hare, run twenty times round the tree!" cried the Musician, and the little Hare obeyed, and when it had run round twenty times it had twisted the string twenty times round the trunk of the tree; and the little Hare was caught, and let it pull and tug as it liked, it only made the string cut into its tender neck.

"Wait there till I come back," said the Musician, and went onward.

The Wolf, in the mean time, had pushed and pulled and bitten at the stone, and had worked so long that he had set his feet at liberty and had drawn them once more out of the cleft. Full of anger and rage he hurried after the Musician and wanted to tear him to pieces. When the Fox saw him running, he began to lament, and cried with all his might, —

"Brother Wolf, come to my help; the Musician has betrayed me!" The Wolf drew down the little tree, bit the cord in two, and freed the Fox, who went with him to take revenge on the Musician. They found the tied-up Hare, and they set him free; then they all sought the enemy together.

The Musician had once more played his fiddle as he went on his way, and this time he had been more fortunate. The sound reached the ears of a poor Wood-cutter, who at once, whether he would or no, gave up his work and

came with his hatchet under his arm to listen to the music.

“At last comes the right comrade,” said the Musician, “for I was seeking a human being, and no wild beast.” And he began and played so finely and with such charm that the poor man stood there as if bewitched, and his heart leaped with gladness. And as he thus stood, the Wolf, the Fox, and the Hare came up, and he saw well that they had some evil design. So he raised his shining axe and placed himself before the Musician, as if to say, —

“Whoso wishes to touch my master, let him beware, for he will have to do with me !” Then the beasts were scared and ran back into the woods. The Musician, however, played once more to the man out of gratitude, and then went onward.

THE QUEEN BEE.

Two sons of a King once went out to see the world. They fell into such a wild way of living that they never came home again. There was still a third son, who was called Simpleton, and he set out to seek his brothers. He found them at last, but they mocked him for thinking that such a simple fellow as he could get through the world, when they two could not make their way, and yet were so much cleverer.

They all three set forth on a new journey, and came to an ant-hill. The two elder wanted to destroy it, to see the little ants creeping about in their terror, and carrying their eggs away, but Simpleton said, —

“Leave the creatures in peace; I will not let you disturb them.” Then they went on till they came to a lake, on which a great number of ducks were swimming. The two brothers wanted to catch a couple and roast them, but Simpleton would not agree, and said, —

“Leave the creatures in peace; I will not let you kill them.” At last they came to a bee’s nest, in which there was so much honey that it ran out of the trunk of the tree where it was.

The two wanted to make a fire under the tree, and stifle the bees ; then they could take away the honey, but Simpleton again stopped them, and said, —

“ Leave the creatures in peace ; I will not let you burn them.” At last the two brothers came to a castle where stone horses were standing in the stables, and no human being was to be seen ; they went through all the halls until, quite at the end, they came to a door in which were three locks. In the middle of the door there was a little pane, through which they could see into the room.

There they saw a little gray man, who was sitting at a table. They called him, once, twice, but he did not hear ; at last they called him for the third time ; then he got up, opened the locks, and came out. He said nothing, but led them to a table set with all manner of dishes, and when they had eaten and drunk, he took each of them to a bedroom.

Next morning the little gray man came to the eldest, nodded to him, and led him to a stone table, on which were written three tasks ; if he could do these, the castle could be set free, for it was enchanted. The first was, that in the wood, beneath the moss, lay a thousand pearls, belonging to a princess ; these must be picked up, and if by sunset one single pearl was missing, he who had looked for them would be turned to stone.

The eldest went thither, and sought the whole day, but when it came to an end, he had found only one hundred, and what was written on the table came to pass, and he was changed into stone.

Next day, the second brother tried his hand ; but it did not fare much better with him than with the eldest ; he did not find more than two hundred pearls, and was changed to stone.

At last the turn came to Simpleton, who also sought in the moss. It was, however, so hard to find the pearls, and he got on so slowly, that he sat down on a stone, and wept. And while he was thus sitting, the King of the ants, whose life he had once saved, came with five thousand ants, and before long the little creatures had got all the pearls together, and laid them in a heap.

The second task was to fetch out of the lake the key of the bedchamber of the King's daughter. When Simpleton came to the lake, the ducks which he had saved swam up to him, dived down, and brought the key out of the water.

But the third task was the most difficult. The King had three daughters who slept side by side ; he must point out the youngest and dearest. Now they looked exactly alike, and were only to be told apart by their having eaten different sweetmeats before they fell asleep : the eldest

a bit of sugar ; the second a little syrup ; and the youngest a spoonful of honey.

Then the Queen of the bees, which Simpleton had saved from the fire, came and tasted the lips of all three, and at last she stayed on the mouth which had eaten honey, and thus the King's son knew the right princess.

So the enchantment was at an end ; everything was freed from sleep, and those who had been turned to stone received once more their old forms. Simpleton married the youngest and sweetest princess, and after her father's death he became King, and his two brothers had the two other sisters.



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